THE DEVELOPMENT OF DEMONSTRATIVE THEISM IN THE SCOTTISH THOUGHT OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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TO

MY MOTHER AND FATHER

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PREFACE

This thesis is presented to the Faculty of Divinity, New College, Edinburgh, in fulfillment of requirements for the Ph.D. degree. It is an effort to characterize theistic development in Scotland until the turn of the present century. The tendencies and achievements of this movement of religious thought have had a profound and lasting effect upon Scottish philosophy and theological science—particularly the latter—down to the present time. No attempt has been made, however, to trace the threads of development past the year 1900. The date is, of course, only a convenience.

I wish to express my thanks to many associated with New College, Edinburgh, in various capacities, who gave invaluable assistance, advice, and criticism during two memorable years in Scotland. I am particularly indebted to Professor John Baillie, who suggested the subject of this study and made helpful suggestions as to its unfolding. The librarians and assistant librarians of New College, of Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey, and of Western Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, have shown great kindness and patience on occasions too numerous to mention: to them, a special word of thanks is due.

Finally, this thesis has been typed entirely by Miss Pearl Wild, at a considerable sacrifice of time and effort. I am sincerely grateful.

INTRODUCTION

At a time when the natural theology prevalent in the eighteenth century withered under concentrated attack, when the deism of Tindal and Toland, as well as the theism of Locke, Butler, and Paley, were being abandoned as tenable religious philosophies, a somewhat different "natural theology" came into being in Scotland. It stood at first only on the fringe of the Christian revelation, serving as a halting introduction to revealed truth. Under various influences, however, this Scottish natural theology was expanded into fully developed theistic philosophies variously relating themselves to historical Christianity. This development, which took place mainly in the nineteenth century, is the concern of this study.

If any one factor may be singled out as marking the distinctive character of Scottish natural theology and theism, it is the central place given to human nature. David Hume had set a pattern. His Treatise on Human Nature was probably the most significant single work on philosophy ever to appear in Scotland. Its importance in the development of British empiricism has long been recognized. What seems to be overlooked generally is its paramount importance as a work of Scottish thought, and as the hard anvil upon which later Scottish thinkers down through the nineteenth century hammered out their own distinctive doctrines. By and large, Hume's successors were not sceptics, but theists who held that a religious, and specifically Christian, view of life has sound foundations that are discoverable by reason. Principal Tulloch, writing late in the nineteenth

century could point out, with considerable justice, that Hume "in his native country ... never carried before him the drift of speculation ... as he did in England;" and further, that "his limits have been understood in Scotland as in Germany; and, acknowledged to be impregnably strong on his own ground, the measure of this ground has yet been noted and pointed out."[1] That is to say, Hume's views on philosophy and religion goaded Scotsmen to the rational defense of their beliefs at a time when, in England and elsewhere, the conviction was growing that Hume had given the coup de grace to any rational exposition of religion. The resulting natural theology differed from the eighteenth century English version in that it began with the human nature discovered at the center of all scientific thinking by David Hume. The eighteenth-century interest in "nature" as it had been triumphantly "naturized" by Newton was placed in subordination to the "science of man." And the further development of Scottish theism throughout the nineteenth century owes much of what distinctive teaching it may be said to possess to its discernably anthropocentric outlook. While this changed outlook altered the theistic argument significantly, it nevertheless claimed the highest credentials possible to human reason. The main body of Scottish theistic writing, with several conspicuous exceptions, may therefore be characterized as demonstrative in this general sense.

Demonstrative theism, then, was a rationally developed natural theology based upon man as part and center of nature. It was concretely exemplified in a number of diverse works by Hume's Scottish successors down through the nineteenth century. Some regarded themselves primarily as theologians, others as philosophers. Demonstrative theism was in no

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1. Modern Theories in Philosophy and Religion, p. 438.

sense the work of a single school of theological or philosophical doctrine. No one individual gave it a definitive expression. It made no claim to be a self-consciously national development: indeed, in its later phases, any uniquely Scottish elements tended to submerge themselves in a more cosmopolitan current of thinking. The cultural climate of the nineteenth century was not favorable to the development of a clearly defined and widely acceptable body of theistic doctrine. And such agreement as did exist among Scottish theists is easily lost amid their more labored statements of disagreement. At times disagreement seems to be the dominant characteristic of the Scottish mind and is perhaps the most formidable obstacle to any study of main tendencies and movements of theistic thinking in Scotland. Nevertheless, an important minimum of agreement and supplementary doctrine make the undertaking worthwhile.

The nineteenth century was an age of spiritual and intellectual ferment in Scotland, as in England and in the rest of Europe--a ferment expressing itself in dissatisfaction with old ways of life and thought, and in a persistent effort to arrive at new, and more adequate beliefs. This was, of course, only one aspect of that larger flux, seen variously in intense scientific curiosity, the growth of industrialism, the spread of social unrest, pressure for political change, the flowering of art and literature, and the sporadic appearance of religious revivals.[1] Many, if not all, facets of this complex scene found brilliant notice in the tortuous social and metaphysical outbursts of Carlyle, and indirectly in the Romanticism of Scott. But at the core of the troubled mass of national

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1. For general historical background I am most indebted to the following works: P. Hume Brown, History of Scotland, Vol. III; G. M. Travelvan, History of England; J. H. Randall, Jr., The Making of the Modern Mind. This last is a valuable study of the history of thought since the Renaissance.

vitality lay a critical spiritual problem that dominated serious thought, both literary and academic. Whom or what shall men worship? Is there a God worthy of adoration, and can He be known? Or is nature ultimately a spiritless vortex of matter, a "huge, dead, immeasurable Steam-engine, rolling on, in its dead indifference, to grind 'man' limb from limb?" Have righteousness, truth, beauty, so valued by the human spirit, any meaning or foundation in a truly spiritual reality? David Hume had had a leading part in bringing about the crisis of thought that made such questionings inevitable. Hence it was no longer possible for Scotsmen to stand aloof from the discussion of these basically religious problems as they had during the Deistic Controversy of the eighteenth century. Scottish thought was thus drawn into the general quest for religious certainty. Interestingly enough, the century-long movement of research among academic theologians and philosophers followed the general path taken by Carlyle in his passionate search for God. It began with the doctrines of God and man embodied in the confessions and theological expositions of the stricter Scottish Calvinists; then it traversed a barren and circuitous road of uncertainty in order to meet the challenge of Hume's somewhat sceptical views; but at last it escaped Doubting Castle and moved toward a new kind of religious philosophy in alliance with German Idealism. At the end of the nineteenth century, Scottish theism was largely dominated by German influences, but did not lose entirely the marks of its origin as a distinctively Scottish natural theology.

This study cannot pretend to be an exhaustive account of the movements and counter-movements that affected Scottish religious philosophy in the nineteenth century, but by focusing on a few representative figures may indicate their general result. Little interest has been shown in the

beginnings of Scottish natural theology, or in the relation of this growth to the later works on theism by Robert Flint, Campbell Fraser, A. S. Pringle-Pattison, and their contemporaries-- who were largely influenced by French and German thinking. Scotsmen themselves have been content to acknowledge the failure of their countrymen to make striking contributions to the development of a "rational theology" or "religious metaphysic."[1] And histories of philosophy, generally written in the shadow of Kant and German Idealism, attribute little or no significance to what pronouncement Scottish "Common Sense Philosophy" did make on questions of natural theology. The usual verdict on the development of Scottish thought subsequent to Hume is deprecatory: it failed to see the point of the Sceptical onslaught on natural theology, appealing to the vulgar consciousness of the common man to sustain belief in God and the soul's immortality.[2] It is true, of course, that Scotland did not feel the germinating influence of the Kantian revolution in thought until late in the nineteenth century. The charge of provincialism can justly be made against the majority of the Common Sense school, with the conspicuous exception of Sir William Hamilton. But, the rationale of Scottish doctrine from Thomas Reid to the inception of the Idealistic movement in Scotland

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1. E.g. Professor Campbell Fraser had occasion to note: "Natural or Rational Theology, as the higher branch of Metaphysics, is almost unknown in Scotland--a very different study having usurped the name. (Essays in Philosophy, p. 205.) J. H. Leckie in his life of Fergus Ferguson, D.D. remarks that with the exception of McLeod Campbell's The Nature of the Atonement, Scottish theology and philosophy was simply a reflection of movements originated elsewhere. Cf. Introductory chapter.

2. The judgment is that of Kant himself, made in his Prolegomena, evidently before seeing the later, more acute works of Thomas Reid. (Cf. the illuminating chapter on "The Fate of Reid" in O. M. Jones, Empiricism and Intuitionism in Reid's Common Sense Philosophy; Princeton, 1927). This judgment is variously repeated by Kant's intellectual descendents, among whom may be listed the historians Ueberweg, Weber, and Windelband. E. g., cf. Windelband, A History of Philosophy (tr. by J. H. Tufts; New York, 1893), pp. 459-60, 482-3.

has been widely misunderstood. And truer information needs to be placed in the general histories of thought. Professor Andrew Seth (Pringle-Pattison), in his small book on Scottish Philosophy, compared the Scottish and German answers to Hume, not entirely to the detriment of his countrymen. But being himself an ardent Idealist, he was not inclined to work out the relations obtaining between Scottish philosophy and the theology that provided it with an "ontology."[1] He shared to some extent the general assumption that the Scottish failure to elaborate a religious metaphysic was simply a defect of rational acumen, rather than the evidence of a non-rationalistic doctrine with some foundation in principle. By Professor Pringle-Pattison's time, Scottish thought had moved far from the original position of Thomas Reid, although his older and younger contemporaries, Campbell Fraser[2] and A. J. Balfour, had considerable sympathies with the "mediating philosophy" that Reid labored to establish—the "mediating philosophy" that may be used as a touchstone of Scottish "natural theology." Although the verdict of triumphant Idealism upon the worth of the Scottish development must ultimately be taken into account, there is room for historical interest in the actual growth of this somewhat provincial

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1. Cf. Scottish Philosophy, pp. 213-16.

2. In his brief work on Thomas Reid, Professor Campbell Fraser sums up the development of Scottish thought from the time of Reid, much in the spirit of the "mediating philosophy": "The alternatives presented to this generation—either agnostic pessimist despair or univeral science in which man is in some sense identified with God—final nescience versus final omniscience—ultimate and universal problem of existence taking the place of a Reid's science of human mind—represent the unending struggle between sceptical distrust of the Universal Power, ignorantly worshiped, and reasonable ethical faith in the Universal power, with consequent hope for men. It is in Scotland a new form of the war with David Hume to which Reid's life was given." (pp.155-6.)

doctrine, before it came into closer alignment with religious philosophies originating mainly in Germany. And this study is dominated by just this historical interest. It is perhaps not entirely out of place at a time when the triumph of Idealism is widely suspect among philosophers, and the rationalistic assumptions of philosophy in general are repudiated by influential theologians, Scottish natural theology came into being under circumstances comparable to these, when rationalism of the eighteenth century was in decline, and theologians of the older Scottish tradition were content to "rub salt in the philosophers' wounds." The parallel may perhaps prove instructive.

The historical problem, in other words, cannot be dissociated from the theological problem which has to do with the truth of theistic reasonings. While it is not the purpose of this study to interpose critical judgments on doctrines of the Scottish theists to be considered--judgments formed by movements of current thinking, it is impossible to do justice to the history of the matter without bearing in mind constantly that there is truth at stake. To rehearse ideas and doctrines of the past with no regard for their inward urgency as realizations of truth is to falsify history. An adequate method must therefore set the details of nineteenth century Scottish theism in what might be described as a historical space of which theology is the fourth dimension--in a historico-theological continuum. What was then, and is still, being sought was a knowledge of God and of God's relation to reality in all its aspects. The means of search with which this study is concerned was human reason primarily, employed by successive thinkers to criticize previous conclusions and arrive at more satisfactory results. Those results, as has

already been indicated, may be classified together as forms of demonstrative theism. They gave varying expression to the belief that the ultimate reality is one supreme Being, who relates Himself in a vital way to the human spirit or personality; whose completeness and perfection are somehow set over against the incompleteness and imperfection of all other reality, and whose existence is more than a postulate of theoretical reason—it is the surety of human knowledge. The statement and restatement of the so-called theistic proofs is consequently at the heart of the historico-theological problem. The positive significance attached to the proofs distinguishes demonstrative theism from doctrines drawn wholly from the chief theistic religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism.[1]

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1. The definition of demonstrative theism thus vaguely suggested is perhaps the best that can be offered by way of introduction. In more recent discussion, the term "theism" has been variously defined, as, for example, by Professor A. E. Taylor: "We shall probably not depart far from the implications of current language if we agree to define theism as the doctrine that the ultimate ground of things is a single supreme reality which is the source of everything other than itself and has the characters of being (a) intrinsically complete and perfect and (b), as a consequence, an adequate object of unqualified worship. ... The suggested definition in fact coincides with the famous formula of St. Anselm, that God is id quo maius cogitari non potest, 'the being than which none greater can be thought.'" (Article on "Theism," Hastings' Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. XII, p. 261.) It would not be in keeping with serious historical interest, however, to impose a definition upon those who lived within the period in question.

The term "demonstrative theism" was not employed by any of the Scottish theists to be considered, and seems to have a very limited history. It appeared in a work by Prof. Alfred Caldecott entitled, The Philosophy of Religion in England and America, and was there used to designate theistic systems depending mainly on deductive arguments. By misconception he includes Robert Flint in this classification, and places Thomas Chalmers, John Tulloch, and John Caird—who will figure largely in this thesis—in other classifications. None of these in fact understands "demonstration" in the limited sense given it in deductive logic, but use it more in the etymological sense of "showing" or "pointing out" the Divine reality by the unfolding of a logic deemed appropriate to the subject or to the limited powers that human reason can bring to the subject. The presence of the theistic proofs in some positive form is the general criterion to be used hereafter in constituting the company of demonstrative theists.

It is of first importance to note at the outset that the use of the theistic proofs is not in itself an indication of a thoroughly rationalistic approach to the study of religion. Because they are given a place in the philosophy of Thomas Reid and the natural theology of Thomas Chalmers does not mean that these Scotsmen were simply echoing the strains of eighteenth century rationalistic theism, or were ignoring the fact that David Hume had lived and passed hostile judgment upon any attempt to establish the existence and attributes of God by the exercise of reason. Had the Deistic controversy not raged in England, it is very unlikely that Scotsmen would have taken the interest they did in natural theology. The indebtedness is obvious. But this must not be allowed to obscure the possibility that natural theology was transformed by translation into an intellectual environment long hostile to the very axioms of rationalism. It is this possibility that the historians of thought have not taken seriously enough, and in consequence the Scottish development of the proofs has seemed to have little or no significance. Now, it can be shown that a transformation did take place, which led to a reinterpretation and re-evaluation of the proofs. But first, it is necessary to characterize the rationalistic theism of the eighteenth century, in which the problem of natural theology was forcefully raised for the modern mind. To this, the remainder of the introduction will be devoted.

For much of Europe, the eighteenth century was preeminently the Age of Reason, and England led in exalting it. Confidence in the faculty of rational insight had a considerable history before John Locke gave definitive form to widely held beliefs—the form that was to mold English thought down to the nineteenth century. The application of reason to religious matters, for example, had since the time of Lord Herbert of

Cherbury held promise of providing a final resolution of differences between warring Christian sects. Rational theologians and Christian philosophers had come forward, particularly at Cambridge, to urge the reverent use of reason, instead of the sword, to determine the fundamental articles of religious belief. Fully in the spirit of this tradition, Locke wrote his work on The Reasonableness of Christianity, claiming as qualifications for the task only the piety and fairness of mind that must characterize a reasonable man. This amounted to the large and critical assumption that an essential and universal human "faculty," reason, can determine the essence of religion--which is tantamount to saying that reason can determine for all practical purposes the realities with which religion is concerned, as well as the nature of that concern. Just how this primary axiom was developed in the Age of Rationalism can perhaps be indicated best by noting its presence in the characteristic doctrines of Locke which constitute his philosophical rendering of Christianity. Though modified in significant respects by Samuel Clarke, Bishop Butler, and William Paley, Locke's formulation was sufficiently catholic in its day to be used by his successors as the authoritative statement of the problem of religious thought. Significantly enough, deists as well as theists, claimed Locke as their own, though there is no doubt he would have sided with the theists generally in the celebrated Deistic Controversy.

In The Reasonableness of Christianity, Locke recognizes two independent sources of religious knowledge--two distinct origins of the idea of God, and with it of the idea of man's responsibilities in the sight of God. The first is supernatural revelation, authenticated as revelation through the performance of miracles by the bearers of the Divine

truth, and through the fulfillment of prophecies by those favored messengers. The second is necessary inference from the facts of inner perception by anyone who studiously fulfills the requirements of valid inference. For the majority of Europeans, the revelation contained in the Scriptures of Christianity occasions the first clear and distinct ideas of Deity, worship, and ethics. But at the same time, Locke maintains that an immediate and coercive demonstration of ultimate realities is possible universally for every mind that devotes itself attentively to its own rational nature and considers what that nature implies. As for practical effectiveness in disseminating religious knowledge, he holds that revelation is by far the more important and "authoritative" of the two. Rational demonstrations give only fragmentary glimpses of man's whole duty to God and his neighbor. Revelation gives the comprehensive picture. For the great majority, historical-dogmatic considerations must take precedence over the philosophic. But at the same time, when Locke considers the truth of religion, and seeks appropriate reasons for commending Christianity as true faith, he reverses the order and gives precedence to the theistic knowledge inferentially derived. The norm of all that is to be accepted as true and acted upon as trustworthy is ultimately the knowledge that is obtained by man's native faculty of reason. Before its bar, revelation as well as the miracles and fulfilled prophecies that authenticate it must stand. Hence, Locke defines the relation of reason and revelation for the eighteenth century in this way:

> Reason is natural revelation, whereby the eternal Father of light and fountain of all knowledge, communicates to mankind that portion of truth which he has laid within the reach of their natural faculties: revelation is natural reason enlarged

> by a new set of discoveries communicated by God immediately; which reason vouches the truth of, by the testimony and proofs it gives that they come from God. So that he that takes away reason to make way for revelation, puts out the light of both.[1]

In other words, the content of revelation and the means of apprehending it--which is faith--are wholly dependent upon the industry of reason. Locke is obviously the inheritor of the Cartesian revolution. If in medieval rationalism there was room to acknowledge two equally valid sources of religious truth--faith and reason, it is apparent that in Locke faith is completely overshadowed by reason. Revelation is to be accepted not as faith-inspiring truth, but because it is accompanied by amazing irregularities about which it is possible to reason, seemingly in the same way that a Newton can reason about the amazing regularities of the solar system. Miracles, like masses in motion, compel rational consideration. The question then arises as to the character and extent of the religious knowledge to be obtained by reason. And the answer involves some basic tenets of Locke's philosophy, but chiefly his doctrine of the "three-fold knowledge of existence." "I say ... that we have the knowledge of our own existence by intuition; of the existence of God by demonstration; and of other things by sensation."[2] It is to be understood, of course, that Locke's view reflects Descartes' celebrated three-league journey from doubt to certainty, and that Locke adopts as his own several important Cartesian axioms. He retains the doctrine of the duality of substances--mental and material, and the consequent notion of their relation to one another through the medium of "representative perceptions." He accepts the criterion of "clear and distinct ideas" as the mark of true knowledge,

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1. Essay Concerning Human Understanding (Fraser's Edition), Bk. IV, Chap. XIX, Sect. 4: (Vol. II, P. 431). Quotes from this source hereafter will give reference in this same order, omitting "Book," "Chapter," and "Section."

2. Ibid. IV, IX, 2 (Vol. II, p. 304).

adding only that sense experience contributes necessarily to any and all such ideas. According to Locke, there are two kinds of experience: "sensation" and "reflection"—external and internal sense—the data presented to the mind by the five senses and the mind's notice of its own operation upon those data. Out of these materials, his empirical philosophy is built, and the doctrine of the threefold knowledge of existence is furnished. Because the knowledge of self and of external things plays a significant part in the demonstration of God's existence, it is necessary to take all three stages into account.

(a) Knowledge of self, according to Locke, is intuitive, immediate, and indisputable. So certain is it that it neither needs nor is capable of formal proof. The mind thinking, reasoning, doubting, perceives the necessary relation of the idea of "self" with the idea of "real existence"—for knowledge he defines as perception of agreement or disagreement of ideas given in sensation and reflection—and thus reaches an unimpeachable knowledge of its own existence. What Locke does not attempt in working out his doctrine of the "self" is to lift the concept above the level of "popular indefiniteness," although for the purpose of theistic argument, he treats it as equivalent to a "clear and distinct idea." The self somehow holds sensation, perception, and reason in fee; but reason—or the intellectual "faculty" —is dominant, and the most characteristic function of the self. The somewhat cramped and frigid intellectualism that grew out of this teaching in the eighteenth century was, of course, destined to produce a sharp reaction in the Romantic Movement.

Locke's doctrine of the "self" is important at the moment only because it is a crucial step in the direction of the second known existence—that of God.

> Though God has given us no innate ideas of himself ... yet having furnished us with those faculties our minds are endowed with, he hath not left himself without witness; since we have sense, perception, and reason, and cannot want a clear proof of him, as long as we carry ourselves about us.[1]

In this sentence Locke foreshadows generations of introspective analysis in the interest of higher philosophy. Scottish philosophy took its cue from Locke in this respect. But David Hume and the Common Sense Philosophers after him took more seriously the suggestion that the empirical "self" be made the center and foundation of philosophy—the "self" that is actually known in experience rather than an idealized rational entity centered upon an inconceivable substance.

(b) In a chapter treating "Of Our Knowledge of the Existence of a God," Locke sets out his promised demonstration, whose solidity he holds "equal to mathematical certainty." Here there are two matters of the first importance; on the one hand, the actual demonstration itself, and on the other, the equation of this reasoning with mathematical reasoning. Locke and his eighteenth century disciples lived in the shadow of Descartes' mathematical philosophy and Newton's Principia with its extraordinary mathematical synthesis: both molded their ways of thinking.

Locke's demonstration is basically the proof to which Kant would attach the term "cosmological": it turns upon a principle of causation. Summarized, it may be stated in this way. (i) That something actually exists every man knows from the certainty of his own self-existence. (ii) Nonentity cannot produce any real thing: therefore, from eternity there has been something—an eternal Being. (iii) This eternal Being must be most powerful to be the source and original of all existing powers. (iv) The most powerful, eternal Being must also be most knowing to be the source

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1. Ibid., IV, X, 1 (V. II, p. 306).

of the knowledge and reason which man finds in himself--it being held impossible that "incogitative" matter should produce a "cogitative" being. (v) The summary inference is that there is an eternal, most powerful, and most knowing Being--a necessarily existing eternal Mind, "which whether any one will please to call God, it matters not. The thing is evident."[1] "It is plain to me we have a more certain knowledge of the existence of a God, than of anything our senses have not immediately discovered to us. Nay, I presume I may say, that we more certainly know that there is a God, than that there is anything else without us."[2] In the light of voluminous subsequent criticism, it is clear that numerous exceptions can be taken to this formulation of the argument. There will be occasion presently to consider Hume's criticisms. What is implicit at each successive step of the argument, however, is the universal and necessary validity--the a priori validity--of the principle that every existing thing given in experience must have a cause, from which it is distinguished as an effect, and to which it nevertheless owes its distinctive character.

In the light of this principle, the most important theological consequence of treating nature as a realm of effects is the conception of a God who is external to His creatures, but at the same time is like them in power and in knowledge. In the Deistic Controversy that resulted from Locke's teaching, the two aspects of his use of the causal principle played a vital part. But while the element of externality has been stressed as characterizing the deistic notion of God--the great First Cause and Creator of all things--it was the assumed conformity of Divine knowledge to human

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1. Ibid., IV, X, 6 (Vol. II, p. 309).
2. Ibid., IV, X, 6 (Vol. II, p. 310).

knowledge, and of Divine powers to human powers that bore up the controversy. Man's rational nature is homogeneous with its Cause and the reproduction of it. While God is immeasurably greater than His creatures, and not subject as they are to the distortions of passion and "enthusiasm," reason retains the stamp of man's likeness to God in the midst of unlikeness. In its purity, it is "natural revelation;" human knowledge is consequently the counterpart and index of Divine knowledge; and human creativity mirrors God's own creative work. On such premises as these, both deists and theists were at one in holding that all knowledge essential to religion is obtainable by reading human reasonings and powers back into the First Cause. Moral reasonings are placed alongside the theoretical, for Locke and his followers thought moral order a direct extension of rational order. God is thus seen to be the Moving Spirit of moral and rational orderliness. He is worshipped most worthily by extracting His thoughts from His creation and thinking them after Him, without the distortion of passion or "enthusiasm." And in a future state, He may be expected to apportion rewards and punishments in the measure that men have seconded or hindered His cosmic order. This minimum of natural religious knowledge was common ground in the Deistic Controversy. But the theists went beyond their opponents by holding in addition that man's interest in God is returned by Him; and that on occasion He has imparted certain knowledge not readily accessible to human reason, which it is nevertheless capable of receiving and approving. In the spirit of Locke, therefore, Bishop Butler commends Christianity,

> First, as a republication, and external institution, of natural or essential Religion, adapted to the present circumstances of mankind, and intended to promote natural piety and virtue: and secondly, as containing an account of a dispensation of things

> not discoverable by reason, in consequence of which, several distinct precepts are enjoined us. For though natural Religion is the foundation and principal part of Christianity, it is not in any sense the whole of it.[1]

The second important matter to be considered in connection with Locke's theistic "demonstration" is the claim that it is equivalent to mathematical certainty. Given the idea of man's rational self, he holds it possible to pass by an intermediate series of related ideas to the notion of a God who exists and is the Supreme Being. "Those intervening ideas, which serve to show the agreement of any two others, are called proofs; and where the agreement and disagreement is by this means plainly and clearly perceived, it is called demonstration; it being shown to the understanding, and the mind made to see that it is so."[2] Mathematical reasoning is demonstration par excellence. Its method had seemed to Descartes the only one worthy of philosophy, and Spinoza made a strenuous effort to prove him right. For Locke, mathematical reasoning and mathematical demonstration are normative. He evidently holds that the ideas and relations entering into the five main stages of the theistic proof sufficiently approximate the abstract relations and notions of quantity employed in mathematics to yield a theistic inference of equal certainty. The matter is to be decided by the purest logical operation of the intellect. To know God, the only prerequisite is sufficient rational acumen to determine

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1. The Analogy of Religion, Pt. I, Chap. I, Sect. 4 (J. H. Bernard's Edition, pp. 139-40). Acute moral sensitivity is recognized as the outstanding mark of all Butler's thinking, for which he still deserves to be studied. He is also typical of the many enlighteners for whom the moral rather than the theoretical issue was primary. But Butler leaves no doubt that his moral doctrine and Christian expositions have the boldest kind of rationalistic presuppositions.

2. Locke, op. cit., IV, II, 3 (Vol. II, p. 179.)

the idea of self and to apply the a priori notion of causation.[1] Not only so, but to have the ideas of self and God clearly in mind is, ideally, to have the elements necessary for the further demonstration of moral principles, and therefore to know man's responsibilities in the sight of God.

> The idea of a supreme Being, infinite in power, goodness, and wisdom, whose workmanship we are, and on whom we depend; and the idea of ourselves, as understanding, rational creatures, being such as are clear in us, would, I suppose, if duly considered and pursued, afford such foundations of our duty and rules of action as might place morality amongst the sciences capable of demonstration: wherein I doubt not but from self-evident propositions, by necessary consequences, as incontestible as those in mathematics, the measures of right and wrong might be made out.[2]

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1. Locke, of course, did not make a careful distinction between the "cosmological" proof and the "ontological" proof, or recognize any dependence of one upon the other. He was unimpressed by Leibnitz' argument from the idea of a Being whose "essence implies existence." But while doubting the force of an "ontological" argument, he does not dismiss it entirely. And there is perhaps reason to believe that Locke provided the germ of Samuel Clarke's celebrated a priori proof. Ibid., IV,X, 7 (Vol. II, pp. 310-12). Nevertheless, the eighteenth century as a whole did not follow Clarke. With Butler and Paley, it shifted its attention from "efficient" to "final" causes. While the argument is given in analogical form, it is thought a coercive demonstration because it has its beginning in the datum of a mathematically precise world-machine, patently designed! Cf. Paley's Natural Theology, Chapter XXIII.

2. Ibid., IV, III, 18 (Vol. II, p. 208). This mere suggestion of Locke was also worked out after a fashion by Samuel Clarke. The other side of Locke's ethical doctrine—his nascent utilitarianism-with its more empirical approach to morals—was variously elaborated by Butler and Paley. But, while different schemes of motivation were expounded to explain how imperfect human nature is to be brought into alignment with the perfect moral order, established by God, the sovereign Being of God is the keystone in the moral arch, and this is established by rational demonstration. Bishop Butler would not agree that the imperative character of moral demands springs from logically coercive proofs, but the Being of God is in some sense the presupposition of his doctrine of conscience, and "A religious conception of the universe and man is always for him an ultimate axiom." (Cf. W. R. Matthews, Introduction to Butler's Three Sermons on Human Nature, p. xxiii.)

On such a view, to which Locke himself could not hold consistently, moral and religious imperatives are variant forms of rational coercion, of which mathematical demonstration is the plainest example. Thus the diversity of human knowledge is brought to a single focus,—or so it would seem. Actually, Locke's avowed empiricism, which is the chief interest of his philosophic writings, placed a number of obstacles in the way of a consistent rational theology. One such difficulty must be mentioned in connection with the third and final stage of man's "three-fold knowledge of existence."

(c) Knowledge of all "other things" beside self and God is said to come by sensation. And this form of knowledge stands on a lower plain than that derived from intuition and demonstration. Sensation vouches for the existence of particular things, but only at the moment of experience, and only by means of faculties which in part reveal and in part conceal what it is that exists. This element of uncertainty is enlarged when the moment of experience is gone and the idea of the particular thing has passed into memory, for there is even less guarantee that the idea retained in the mind corresponds to anything existing in actual fact. Thus, Locke is led to the conclusion that sensation gives a very imperfect form of knowledge. And for this reason, observational sciences of all kinds can do no more than systematize a body of knowledge, which possesses only a high degree of probability. Strict scientific demonstration in this area of research is beyond reach, and probability is the only available guide. This teaching affects Locke's theistic "demonstration" because it is to sensation that he traces any and all "ideas" arising in the mind—from the simplest to the most complex. And the all-important notion of causation, which embodies the principle on which the demonstration turns, is explained in the fashion of a thorough-going sensationalism. Locke teaches that the

idea of cause-and-effect is an inference from the repeated experience of natural events.

> In the notice that our senses take of the constant vicissitude of things, we cannot but observe that several particular, both qualities and substances, begin to exist; and that they receive this their existence from the due application and operation of some other being. From this observation we get our ideas of cause and effect.[1]

But clearly the resultant idea of causation does not amount to the a priori assertion that every existing thing given in experience must have a cause. It is at best an imperfect induction from the multitude of particular changes the senses record. And, Locke leaves the matter at this, without reconciling his divergent account of causation. The two views represent two strains in his thinking which his successors were to find radically inconsistent, and they would seek to rectify the inconsistency by moving either toward a more consistent rationalism or a more consistent empiricism. British thought eventually was to take the latter alternative, shaped successively by the Irish Bishop, George Berkeley, and the Scottish Sceptic, David Hume. But until Hume's Treatise of Human Nature appeared, Englishmen lived in the blaze of a confident rationalism that molded literature, art, society, and general mores, as well as theology and science. Even Newton's success in formulating physical principles of wide application was made to serve the spirit of the Age of Reason. The crowning proof of the merits of a systematic empiricism thus seemed to yield the concept of a precisely ordered nature of absolute regularity, whose successions, causes, and effects might ultimately be determined with demonstrative certainty. In that event, Locke's "probability" would be displaced by scientific demonstration, and thus the dissident note that empirical principles introduced

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1. Op. cit., II, XXVI, 1 (Vol. I, p. 433.)

into the structure of his philosophy would be eliminated—leaving only the harmonious symphony of reason.[1]

To what, then did Locke's philosophy and influence direct the religious thinking of the eighteenth century? Clearly, to a thoroughgoing rationalistic theism which would construe all religion—Christianity included—in accordance with thought-forms reached by philosophic "demonstration." Though positive revelations afford the majority of mankind the fullest and most accessible account of religious truth, it is the task of philosophy to vindicate it as truth. Revelation is certified by reason, which moves irresistably from self to God, and from self and God to moral principles. By virtue of this achievement, it assumes responsibility for directing the instruction of all who come to religious truth by the devious and much less arduous approach of Christian faith. Such rationalism assumes that the highest truth is within the reach of philosophy: intellect unclouded by passion is able to reach it. Every line of possible knowledge has its focus in the human mind, for science, ethics, the study of man and society, as well as religion, have each their fixed orbit in the solar system of reason. All is one law, one Providence, one rationality. Hence, Locke prompted his eighteenth century followers to believe that man is <u>by nature</u> the heir of all truth—though reason has yet to assert his claim to the whole inheritance. But this it can do, approximating more and more to the knowledge possessed by Divine Reason, with which it is <u>by nature</u> in full accord. No impassible barrier separates a rational mind from the truth which awaits man's solemn declaration of possession.—A marked tendency toward dispassionate intellectualism and the assumption of a practically

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1. For the growth of the conception of a "Newtonian world-machine" and an undeviating "system of nature," cf. J. H. Randall, Jr., <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 253-279.

limitless scope and competence for human reason--which may be termed its "gnostic tendency"[1]--were implicit in the representative theism of the eighteenth century. These were deeply rooted characteristics of the writings and controversies that raised the issue of "natural theology" for the modern mind.

That English rationalistic theism was a primary source of Scottish natural theology is a fact established by abundant evidence. No work professing to vindicate the truth of religion by rational proof was published in Scotland until Reid and the Common Sense School introduced a form of theistic "demonstration" in reply to Hume. Though Scotsmen were acquainted with deistic writings, they published few refutations, and none by means of a counter-rationalism. Professor Archibald Campbell of St. Andrews wrote an answer to Matthew Tindal's Christianity as Old as Creation, tending to deny the reality, or at least the importance of natural religion. The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland speedily called upon him to answer for the assertion held contrary to the letter and spirit of the Westminster Confession. Eventually the prosecution was dropped, and with it any public consideration of the character and meaning

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1. Prof. Campbell Fraser uses the term "gnosticism" to designate the tendency in various eighteenth and nineteenth century philosophies toward a "universal science in which man is in some sense identified with God" and toward a "final omniscience." Cf. his Thomas Reid (Famous Scots Series), esp. pp. 156-8. Though there are historical objections to Fraser's usage, the term seems the best available. "Gnosticism" and "gnostic tendency" will therefore be understood to designate "the assumption of a practically limitless scope and competence for human reason," especially in determining religious truth.

of natural religion by the leaders of Scottish religious thought.[1] Hence, there was no Scottish counterpart to the literature of the English Deistic Controversy. Scotsmen later acquiring a concern for the problems of natural theology readily turned to the abundant theistic literature produced by their southern neighbors. Reid worked out his "demonstration" by criticizing Locke's. Text-books on theology, such as Principal George Hill's Lectures in Divinity, referred students to the English theists to supplement brief treatments of natural theology. And Thomas Chalmers, whose Natural Theology was the first sustained treatment of the subject by a Scot, acknowledged great indebtedness to various champions of rationalistic theism--particularly Bishop Butler. Something of the dispassionate intellectualism of English rationalism was taken over directly into the style and method of the Scottish theists, and, in Chalmers for example, at times obscures the passionate moral imperative that is in fact the cornerstone of his theistic doctrine.

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1. There was no Deistic controversy in Scotland. Confessional control of religious thought was effective, and was the chief factor in excluding deistic opinions. Confessional censorship insured that no deistic books were published in Scotland, that no deistic thinker occupied an academic chair in any of the universities, and that no deistic opinions enjoyed free public advertisement. Censorship, of course, could not prevent the deistic influence from reaching an interested few. One of unmistakably deistic opinions was William Dudgeon, the tenant of a large farm near Coldstream, on the border of England. He published several works of a deistic flavor in London. Charges of heresy were entered against him in Scottish church courts; they seem to have come to nothing. (Cf. James McCosh, The Scottish Philosophy, pp. 111-113: McCosh mistakenly gives him the Christian name "David.") Dudgeon died at an early age, and his writings aroused little more than the shrewd suspicion that he was a confirmed heretic. Apart from him, there seems to have been no other notable example of full-fledged deism in Scotland, not withstanding J. M. Robertson's judgment to the contrary. (A Short History of Freethought, II, pp. 158-9.) It is a calumny on deism to make it responsible for all defections from Scottish orthodoxy.

English rationalism was the primary source, or resource, of Scottish natural theology. But at least one of its major assumptions was not accepted; that is, that human reason--or "natural reason"--may take possession of truth as it issues from the mind of God simply by the orderly and dispassionate exercise of its powers. That reason is an essential "faculty," or even the essential "faculty," of human nature, the Common Sense theologians were not concerned to deny. But on various grounds they entertained the possibility that this association of reason with human nature may involve a humbler estimate of its scope and a more chastened confidence in its powers than rationalism accorded it. While recognizing as inevitable the attempt of human reason to acquire true knowledge outside the sphere of its acknowledged competence, they resisted the impulse to make rational demonstration the criterion of all truth--and notably, of religious truth. With Thomas Reid, they endeavored to render secure a "mediating position," which would do justice to Locke's "confident" philosophy, and at the same time incorporate the undeniable insights of David Hume's antithetical doctrines. Hume raised issues that Scottish theologians could not ignore, and incorporated in his doctrine positions deeply rooted in the heritage of Scottish Calvinism. No clear understanding of the "mediating position" is possible, therefore, without first bringing Hume into view, and determining his place in the development of Scottish religious thought. It is not likely that this can be done to the complete satisfaction of all students of Hume. Something, nevertheless, must be said.

CHAPTER I

DAVID HUME AND SCOTTISH CONFESSIONALISM

If the David Hume who wrote the Treatise and Enquiries be taken at his word, he somehow was able in his own mind to reconcile the system of "modified scepticism" developed in these works with the relevant articles of Scottish Confessional orthodoxy. The necessity of making a reconciliation was, of course, imposed by Confessionalists, who in many practical ways controlled the Scottish mind during the first half of the eighteenth century. Hume averred on numerous occasions that his thought was not hostile to religion, and this claim has caused difficulty for his interpreters ever since. He worked out the substance of his philosophy most fully and uncompromisingly in the Treatise, whose thesis is outlined in the following passage:

> 'Tis evident, that all the sciences have a relation, greater or less, to human nature; and that however wide any of them may seem to run from it, they still return back by one passage or another. Even Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, and Natural Religion, are in some measure dependent on the science of MAN; since they lie under the cognizance of men, and are judged of by their powers and faculties.[1]

The distinctive mark of Hume's account of human nature, which he boldly makes the foundation of all the sciences, is his contention that "passion," rather than reason, determines human knowledge. As recent studies have

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1. "Introduction", p. xix. (All references are from the Selby-Bigge edition, 1896.) Cf. also p. 273.

shown,[1] the sceptical side of his thought has its most characteristic expression in the principle that "Reason is and ought to be the slave of the passions"--the term "passions" being construed in a quite particular sense. The resultant idea of human nature associated with this principle is such that important limitations are placed upon the solidity and truth of all scientific knowledge acquired by man--with the exception of demonstrations in the abstract sciences of arithmetic and algebra. A rational account of natural religion--such as Locke's theistic demonstration aspired to be--must also be subject to these limitations. And in the detailed unfolding of this doctrine, Hume gives an account of religious knowledge which, to his contemporaries and the vast majority of his interpreters since, has seemed a direct thrust at the heart of religion. Against this is to be set the fact that Hume denied any such intention, and stood resolutely by the denial through the most important years of his philosophical development. Though his later Natural History of Religion and Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion add an undertone of hostility toward the official exponents of religious doctrine, no new principles are introduced which would alter his earlier determination of relations between philosophy and religion.

In the light of evidence gleaned from the writings and general biography of this rather enigmatic Scotsman, it may be argued that Hume was completely in earnest when he repudiated any anti-religious

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1. Cf. Basil Willey, The Eighteenth Century Background, chapter VII and especially, Norman Kemp Smith, The Philosophy of David Hume. The interpretation of Hume offered here has been suggested by Professor Kemp Smith's reappraisal of Hume's philosophy in the light of Francis Hutcheson's moral philosophy. The attempt to reinterpret Hume's thought in closer relation to his Scottish inheritance is paralleled by an attempt to reinterpret Hume's personality in closer relation to his Scottish environment. Cf. Ernest Campbell Mossner's The Forgotten Hume, Le bon David (New York, 1943).

intention,[1] and that this repudiation was not the result of failure to see the logical implications of his own doctrine. It is clear, of course, that Hume meant to overthrow the rationalistic account of religious knowledge: he rejected in part its intellectualism and its "gnostic" tendency in toto. But hostility toward rationalistic theology must not be construed simply to imply hostility toward theology in general, or toward what elements of

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1. The evidence that Hume's convictions were not hostile to religion in general and Scottish theology in particular is the following: (a) Statements in the Treatise and Enquiries to this effect, or asserting that faith is the proper ground of religious conviction: Treatise, p. 250f; pp. 409-11; p. 633, n. 1; etc. Enquiries (all references are from the Selby-Bigge edition, 1902), p. 97; pp. 129-31; pp. 147-8. (b) Hume was on two occasions a candidate for chairs of philosophy--in 1744 for that of "Ethics and Pneumatic Philosophy" in Edinburgh; and in 1751 for that of "Logic" in Glasgow. Subscription to the Westminster Confession was a requisite for holding any University chair; on both occasions Hume declared his readiness to accept it, and to teach nothing contrary to the Confession. His candidacies were met with animosity, distrust, and even contemptuousness by many clergymen. They attached to him the epithets "infidel" and "atheist," which he repudiated. It is understandable, therefore, why Hume's attitude toward the clergy was not dispassionate, and was to a large degree distorted. For this, his friends among the Moderates called him to task. (Cf. E. C. Mossner, The Forgotten Hume, pp. 107-111.) (c) In Hume's private correspondence, particularly that connected with his attempts to gain a university chair, he insistently denied any hostility of his views to the doctrine of the established church. (Cf. Burton, J. H., Life and Correspondence of David Hume, Vol. I, pp. 16; 165-8; 178-9(?); 331-336. Vol. II, pp. 5-16. (d) There are incidental events--his "pious" attitude toward the death of his mother, his answer to the atheists of the French Salon, and a few others--which a recent biographer, J. Y. T. Greig (David Hume; London, 1931) either suspects or rejects outright, largely on the grounds that they are inconsistent with Hume's thoroughly sceptical character. The evidence allowed to stand in its own right would modify this interpretation of the man. (Cf. pp. 171, 299. Also, cp. Burton, op. cit., I, pp. 293-4.) (e) Churchmen who were Hume's intimates, publicly defended him against the charge that his doctrine undermined faith. Cf. the pamphlet published anonymously by Dr. Hugh Blair, when an attempt was made to arraign Hume before the General Assembly of 1755. The pamphlet was entitled, "Observations upon a Pamphlet, intitled 'An Analysis of the Moral and Religious Sentiments contained in the Writings of Sopho (i.e., Lord Kames) and David Hume, Esq.'" (Cf. also, on Hume's defense by Robert Wallace, Mossner, op. cit., pp. 118-123.) Dean Stanley in History of the Church of Scotland (pp. 147-8) summarizes Hume's positive relations with the Church and its clergy, and concludes against the ordinary portrait of Hume the scoffer.

a coherent view of natural theology existed in the Confessional thinking of his own country. Hume was by no means the first Scotsman to take issue with cardinal tenets of the religious philosophy outlined by Locke. Examination shows that important similarities link Hume's thought to that of orthodox Scottish Confessionalists. These similarities suggest grounds on which Hume could well have held his teaching consonent with the all-important doctrinal standards of the Scottish Church. This is far from saying that he was the great philosophical champion of Scottish orthodoxy and defender of the faith. It is only to contend that Hume was justified in seeing himself closer to his Scottish intellectual environment than his interpreters have been willing to allow. And in this perspective, his chief service to Scottish religious thought was to show that a "proved" insufficiency of natural religion is not the soundest introduction to the sufficiency of Christian faith, but may with greater probability create an insuperable obstacle in the way of any theistic belief or religion.

If Hume be taken at his word, it is not only possible to vindicate his intellectual and moral integrity--which has suffered considerably from the usual interpretation of his mind, but it is also possible to explain the new concern with the problems of natural theology that suddenly agitated the Confessionalist mind of Scotland. While for the study of Scottish demonstrative theism the latter interest is primary, it cannot be divorced from the former. On the supposition that Hume was a more thorough sceptic than he professed to be and that the real bent of his mind was anti-theistic, anti-religious, and perhaps atheistic, his teaching is hostile toward all belief in God or in a divine superintendence of human life. He reached a purely negative conclusion, inimical to faith, and at the same time to ordinary concepts of physical nature and human nature. In the terms of

philosophical history, he reduced the empiricism of Locke and Berkeley to its futile extremity; and having done that, he contented himself with pointing out the inevitable conclusions, all adverse to the claims of faith and "common sense." On this view, any concessions made to religion--to its institutional status or its doctrinal standards--must be regarded as only so many prudent sops to Cerberus, at best sarcastic and at worst cynical.[1] On the contrary supposition that Hume was in earnest when disowning any anti-religious intentions or principles, the tributes and memorials of his closest friends to the loftiness of his mind and character become credible.[2] The relations of his philosophy of human nature to his Confessionalist environment becomes a problem worthy of consideration, which on investigation yields significant information.[3] And the after-development of a Scottish natural theology takes on the aspect of an intelligent response to a forthright challenge. In short, less violence is done to the development of

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1. This construction has been put upon Hume's thought, not only by his "religious opponents," but also by others of decidedly agnostic temper. Typical of the former sort was Prof. James Orr (David Hume; Edinburgh, 1903), who, while bringing no "railing accusation," treats Hume's concessions to Scottish orthodoxy as malicious sarcasm. Typical of Hume's more agnostic critics were J. S. Mill and Thomas Huxley. (Cf. N. K. Smith, op. cit., chap. XXIV). Greig in his biography (op. cit.) also sees Hume's allowances for religion and an ecclesiastical establishment as somewhat hypocritical. (Cf. pp. 237-8.)

2. Cf. Adam Smith's impressive tribute to Hume as man and philosopher in his letter to William Strahan (quoted in N. K. Smith's edition of the Dialogues, pp. 243-8).

3. The biographer Greig indicates that Hume's only attitude toward the religious life of Scotland was one of contempt--a justified reaction to its bigotry, persecution, cant, and superstition. He omits the possibility that Hume's first inclination toward "modified scepticism" may have come from the Scottish church rather than in reaction to it. As a biographer of Hume, Greig evidently suffers from two serious disadvantages: he is an Englishman and a rationalist, who tends to recreate Hume as both Englishman and rationalist.

thought in Hume himself and among his countrymen when it is seen against its Scottish background than when it is forced into the alien mold of Hume's ordinary interpreters. What, then, was the religious, or specifically the theological, inheritance of Scotland?

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While in England the religious and political turmoil of the seventeenth century ended in the age of enlightened reason and toleration--whose guiding light was John Locke, the Settlement in Scotland brought complete victory to the "spiritual successors of the upholders of the Covenants," whose faith and national policies were centered in the Westminster Confession. The differences between the two countries during the following half-century--in temperament, prevailing interest, and intellectual endeavor--were as great as the gulf separating Locke's treatment of religious truth in the Reasonableness of Christianity from the labored theological precision of the Westminster Confession, which was Scottish by adoption if not by composition. In the eyes of its proponents, the Confession had more in common with a party political platform than with the systematic conclusions of a philosopher: it was a matter for moral and social action allowing little room for rational speculation. They took it to be the broad outline of God's policy for His universal Church, of which they were constituted the executives. To stray from the meaning of its one hundred and seventy-one propositions--except in the direction of greater and greater nicety--would be unthinkable.[1] And from these they derived warrant to suppress, and if possible eliminate, all doctrine contrary to the

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1. An act of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1696 forbade "all ministers and members of the Church to publish by speaking, writing, printing, teaching, or preaching, any doctrine, tenet, or opinion, contrary to or inconsistent with the Confession of Faith, or any article, part, or proposition therein." Quoted in The Church of Scotland Past and Present, (Ed. by R. S. Story), Vol. IV, pp. 227-8.

Word of God, as expounded in Calvinist teachings. It was this statement of faith, therefore, that provided the standard by which Scotsmen measured the questions raised in the writings of Locke and his disciples.

Examination of the Confession shows a somewhat indefinite view of the relation between revelation and natural reason, though the tendency is clearly to teach that Scriptural revelation alone gives a saving knowledge of God and His will, and that "natural light," which is in reason and conscience, is by contrast wholly inadequate to such knowledge. All that is said about the possibility of bringing natural light to bear on the elements of religion is summed up in the first article of the first chapter, and, in fact, in the first sentence.

> Although the light of nature, and the works of creation and providence do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, as to leave man inexcusable, yet they are not sufficient to give that knowledge of God, and of his will, which is necessary unto salvation; therefore it pleased the Lord at sundry times, and in divers manners, to reveal himself, and to declare that his will unto his church; and afterwards, for the better preserving and propagating of the truth, and for the more sure establishment and comfort of the Church ..., to commit the same wholly unto writing; which maketh the holy Scripture to be most necessary....[1]

All that the Confession has to say about <u>natural religion</u> is based, consequently, upon the pronouncements of Scripture. Its <u>reality</u> among those who have not received the Hebrew-Christian revelation, and also its <u>insufficiency</u>, are revealed truths. The Confession nowhere ventures onto the ground of natural theology, to discover in the name and light of reason, what knowledge of God is possible apart from supernatural revelation. It does not attempt to define the insufficiency of natural light from the side of reason, but sees it in the perspective of the Fall--a

1. Cf. Philip Schaff, <u>The Creeds of Christendom</u>, Vol. III, p. 600. The content of a natural knowledge of God, as mentioned in Scripture--particularly in the Psalms and Epistles of St. Paul--is elaborated in chapter XXI, article 1 (p. 646). Other references: IV, 2; VII, 1; X, 4; XXI, 7.

revealed doctrine; mankind in the persons of Adam and Eve sinned, and thereby fell from their "original righteousness and communion with God," becoming "wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body." Man in his whole being is shown to be alienated from God, and through no effort of his own--apart from the condescension of God--can he gain an adequate and saving knowledge of Him.

In principle, the Confession's teaching is plainly antagonistic to any optimistic rationalism that assumes the sufficiency of natural reason to decide what is essential in Christianity and necessary for salvation. But dogmatic statements of theology are not a rebuttal to philosophical argument, such as Locke's. And there were those in Scotland during the ascendency of English rationalism who proposed to vindicate Scottish faith and doctrine in the face of a movement so imposing and self-confident. To this end, a few Confessionalists within the citadel of Scottish orthodoxy developed a somewhat negative apologetic. They elaborated upon the notion of the "insufficiency of natural light," citing historical and psychological evidence to show that the state of religious knowledge apart from Christian revelation is anything but the edifying cultivation of a pure and lofty theism. They defined their views in relation to Locke's doctrine, thereby setting their own doctrines in sharp relief.

Of those who took this significant step away from the pure Bibliology of the Confession, Thomas Halyburton is perhaps the most important. He was a professor of Theology at St. Andrews briefly from 1710 to 1712. Unlike his successor, Archibald Campbell, he expressed in his writings views with which the Church of Scotland as a whole could concur. In many respects, he was the Scottish counterpart of Bishop Butler--his

Natural Religion Insufficient corresponding to the Analogy of Religion, not only in its intention to vindicate revealed religion against deistic teaching, but equally in the moral intensity and speculative daring of its argument. This work, and his Essay Concerning the Nature of Faith which "corrects" Locke's view of revelation, provide an adequate basis for comparing English and Scottish religious thought before the time of David Hume.[1]

The considerable differences separating Halyburton from Locke appear first of all in what Halyburton conceives to be the primary question of natural theology, and in his method of seeking a solution to the question. Locke had, in effect, assumed the complete adequacy of human reason to reach a definite and normative knowledge of God: his task is therefore the construction of valid arguments, to which all rational minds must give assent. For Halyburton, Locke's demonstrations never quite reach the real crux of natural theology. He admits fully that religion is, in essence, a matter of rational knowledge:

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1. Until mid-century, the question of natural theology and religion on which contemporary English religious thought turned had little place in the writing of Scottish theologians and philosophers. It had none in the most popular theological work of the era, Thomas Boston's Fourfold State: the idea that human understanding in its fallen state is totally corrupt and incapable of a true knowledge of God is developed in an entirely homiletical vein. The question was raised in the works of Halyburton; of Archibald Campbell, whose Oratio de vanitate luminis naturae appeared in 1733, and The Necessity of Revelation in 1739; and of Duncan Forbes of Culloden, a Lord President of the Court of Session, who in 1735 published, Some Thoughts Concerning Religion, Natural and Revealed. Among Scottish academic philosophers, Gershom Carmichael and Francis Hutcheson both wrote on natural theology. Carmichael's Synopsis theologiae naturalis (1729) owed more to Aristotle and the later Scholastics than to original thought. Hutcheson's aesthetic and moral doctrines presuppose certain theistic assumptions. Nevertheless, only in his Metaphysicae synopsis (1742) does he consider theistic proofs, and this book was later disowned as hastily written and foolishly printed. --Halyburton represents the extreme Confessionalism against which the Moderate Hutcheson was among the first to protest. Moderatism gained ascendency, however, only at mid-century.

> Nothing is more plain than this, that religion is founded upon knowledge of the Deity: and that our regard for him will be answerable to the knowledge we have of him. That religion therefore which is defective here, is lame with a witness: and if the light of nature cannot afford such notices of the Deity, as are sufficient or necessary to beget and maintain religion amongst men, then it can never with any rational man be allowed sufficient to direct men in religion.[1]

Halyburton can hardly be charged with being an irrational obscurantist, or "enthusiast" in the worst eighteenth century sense of the term. He admits, further, that the reality of a natural light common to all men gives substance to philosophical speculations concerning the Deity: to deny this--as did Professor Archibald Campbell--would run counter to the Confession's teachings.[2] But granting that there is some true knowledge of God and His will in rational demonstrations such as Locke's, Halyburton questions the "gnostic" assumption, that the knowledge thus reached is adequate to the ultimate end of religion, which is the worthy service of God as He is in truth.

> Religion ... in general, may be justly said to import that veneration, respect, or regard, which is due from the rational creature in his whole course or life, to the supreme super-eminently excellent Being, his creator, preserver, lord or governor, and benefactor.[3]

No doubt Halyburton is himself assuming a teleology which has no place in Locke's system. Be this as it may, he holds that rational beings must order their actions in a manner appropriate to the end toward which they are directed. The primary question for natural theology, therefore, is not whether there is a knowledge of God according to the light of nature, but--when such knowledge is assumed--whether it can be sufficient to

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1. The Works of the Rev. Thomas Halyburton, p. 294.
2. Ibid., pp. 304-5. Also, cf. in the "Essay," p. 530.
3. Ibid., p. 294. Halyburton recognizes lesser ends--the stability of society, the preservation of moral order, etc.--to which natural religion may be adequate. But the service of God is the ultimate and critical end, to which religion is either sufficient or insufficient.

direct men to the worship and service that are due a Being of infinite perfections. Whatever the professed foundation of religious knowledge, its adequacy must be measured by its ability to convey "such a large, comprehensive, certain, plain, and abiding, discovery, as may have sufficient force to influence (man) to a compliance with his duty (to God) in all instances."[1] And so, finally, the problem of natural theology comes to this:

> We are now come to that which seems to be the principal hinge whereon the whole controversy about the sufficiency of natural religion turns; in so far at least, as it is to be determined by this argument. Now this is, whether the light of nature can indeed afford such discoveries of God, as are evinced necessary for the support of religion? ... Now to attempt the decision of this question successfully, it is necessary that we state it right. It is not then the question, whether in nature there is sufficient objective light, as the schools barbarously speak, that is, whether in the works of creation and providence, which lie open to our view, or are the objects of our contemplation, there are such prints of God, which if they were all fully understood by us, are sufficient to this purpose? For the question is not concerning the works of God without us, but concerning us. The plain question is this, "Whether man can from those works of God alone, without help of revelation, obtain such a knowledge of God as is sufficient to the purpose mentioned?"[2]

The fundamental question of natural theology concerns man himself, his natural powers, and his ability to know God without the instruction of the Christian revelation.

This formulation of the question is obviously worked out in the shadow of the Confession's teaching that "man is wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body," because of sin. But this does not preclude its being treated as a question for philosophy--that is, discussed without dogmatic requirements, on a ground that such a one as Locke might recognize as consonent with his own philosophical principles.

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1. Ibid., p. 297. Halyburton has carefully chosen and defined each of the adjectives: cf. pp. 296-7.

2. Ibid., p. 297. The underlining has been added to the text.

And Halyburton finds this common ground in the application of empirical principles to the study of human nature and religion. Neither dogmatic nor speculative considerations are to affect the conclusion, which must be reached by an impartial study of man in history. "We must upon the whole give over the business, or inquire into the extent of our ability by experience; and judge what man can do by what he has done."[1] What Halyburton professes to do, and what he actually accomplishes, are two different matters. But he proposes a study that is independent of all sectarian religious presuppositions--Christian presuppositions included--as to a natural knowledge of God. To achieve this end of an objectivity as complete as possible, Halyburton stipulates certain general rules. To exclude Christian bias, the study must be confined to the religious practices and teachings of those in whom there is no suspicion of Christian influence. Only the best and most critical representatives of such "pagan" religions should be considered--to avoid the imputation of viewing them only in their worst light. The teachings of pagan writers should be studied in their original context, and each religious opinion interpreted against the background of belief from which it is taken. On evidence gleaned in this way, Halyburton chooses to decide the question of natural theology; and within limits, he achieves a degree of objectivity. The conclusion he reaches is aptly expressed in the title of his volume against the deists: Natural Religion Insufficient and Revealed Necessary to Man's Happiness in His Present State.

Halyburton's stipulated rules are, of course, entirely too meager to ensure anything like scientific objectivity. And clearly, he

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1. Halyburton lists four conceivable methods of approaching the question concerning the natural religion of man: the first is dogmatic; the second and third, speculative; the last, empirical. He details his reasons for rejecting the first three. Ibid., pp. 297-8.

has no vital sense of history, as it was to be developed some fifty years later by Hume, Robertson, and others in Scotland and elsewhere. Nevertheless, Halyburton's argument is noteworthy in three respects: (i) it sees natural theology as primarily a question about human nature; (ii) it eschews rationalist demonstration as inconclusive, turning for an answer to the examination of historical and factual beliefs; and (iii) Halyburton's own answer is largely negative in character, finding no evidence of a rational creed common to all religions—which Christianity might graciously republish. These three aspects of Halyburton's argument were evidently genuine facets of the general theological outlook in Scotland, and in one way or another affected the environment in which such a one as David Hume began his intellectual development. As a conclusive reply to the deists in particular, Halyburton's views received the highest endorsement among ministers of the Church of Scotland.[1] It may be assumed that they reached the church as a whole through its clergy.

Halyburton's negative conclusions as to the sufficiency of natural light and religion are of first importance, because they indicate the wide area of human experience in which he finds no "large, comprehensive, certain, plain, and abiding, discovery" of the truth, which can have some practical effect on human life. He lists eight grounds on which the insufficiency of natural religion may be shown: (i) "From the insufficiency of its discovery of the Deity;"[2] (ii) "From its defectiveness

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1. Cf. the "Epistle of Recommendation" attached to the posthumous edition of the Natural Religion Insufficient, bearing the names of William Carstares, James Hadow, William Hamilton, William Wisheart, Thomas Black, James Grierson, and John Fleming. Ibid., p. 254. They represent the effective leadership of the Scottish Church, and probably to a large extent its intellectual leadership.

2. This and the following are the titles of Chapters IV through XI of Natural Religion Insufficient.

in directing as to the worship of God;" (iii) "From its defectiveness in discovering wherein man's happiness lies;" (iv) "From not affording a sufficient rule of duty;" (v) "From its defects as to sufficient motives for enforcing obedience;" (vi) "From its insufficiency in discovering the origin of sin;" (vii) "From its inability to discover the means of obtaining pardon of sin, or to show that it is attainable;" and finally (viii) from its "insufficiency ... to eradicate our inclinations to sin, or subdue its power." Halyburton's method is to exhibit the diverse, and frequently contradictory beliefs entertained by the "pagans," in contrast to the high doctrines of Christian faith. He finds no evidence of a clearly defined core of belief common to all. More important, he finds that what glimpses of high religion were caught by the noblest of the pagan philosophers were without power to move the great masses of men and women, or even the philosophers themselves, to forsake old, brutal, and immoral ways of life and faith. The ultimate task of religion, for Halyburton, is not to give a rational explanation of the world, but to move men to obey even their own highest conceptions of God. The patent and "universal" failure in obedience is the evidence of sin; and sin is for Halyburton, and Confessionalists generally, the fact upon which the rationalist account of religion is broken.

Ostensibly, Halyburton establishes his case only from the objective survey of man in history, though obviously his thoughts are at every point formed by his native environment of Confessional thinking. As a matter of strict logic, his method does not refute Locke's philosophical analysis, though it does provide a counter-balance to the optimistic argument ex consensu gentium developed by Lord Herbert of Cherbury, to

whom eighteenth century rationalists were indebted for their five-point creed of natural religion. A few of Halyburton's arguments are to the point, however, and give some argumentative force to his thorough-going negative conclusions.

Rationalists, and more especially the deists, had explained the diversities and vagaries of historical religions by attributing them either to popular ignorance or malicious priestcraft. Halyburton readily agrees that this was the case--among the pagans, at least.[1] But, while these reasons give a rationally acceptable account of error in religious belief, practically, they designate grave obstacles in the way of multitudes' ever reaching a sufficient and saving knowledge of God. The formulation of an abstract creed does not help the many--the ordinary souls with little logical ability--to discover the truth for themselves, or to withstand the proponents of falsehood.

But even more to the point, Halyburton questions the ability of man to form a notion of God and His attributes, simply by "raising to infinity" those which a man finds in himself. Take the attribute of Divine goodness. God's moral Providence does not correspond to human notions of what is in keeping with goodness and righteousness.

> We see that an almost infinite number of things fall out in the government of the world, which we know not how to reconcile to divine goodness; and as many are left undone, which we would be apt to think infinite goodness would make necessary to be done. This consideration, if well weighed, would make men very sparing in determining any thing necessary to be done, in respect of divine goodness ....[2]

Moreover, Halyburton allows himself to be more "materialistic" than the English rationalists: he asserts an inability of the human mind

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1. Ibid., pp. 457-8.

2. Ibid., p. 465. Hume, of course, was to make a great deal of the avowed discrepancies between the moral dictates of the human conscience and the unfathomable ways of Providence.

to conceive of existence under conditions radically different from those of its present incarnate existence. The mind can form no notions of man's own "eternal felicity" as a disencarnate spiritual being--to say nothing of God's. The fear of death, Halyburton maintains, is fundamentally a fear of the dissolution of the body. Only the knowledge of the resurrection of the body can meet this fear. But there is no such knowledge according to the state of nature, in which man can only experience incarnate felicity, and the stark reality of death.[1] On this evidence alone, he must rely when no special revelation is given. The fear of death, and the inability of man to know his own destiny--and therefore his own nature, is for Halyburton another evidence of the sin that separates man from the Creator and Governor of his life.

It is the radical nature of sin, ultimately, that sets the Confessionalist view against the rationalist. In defining sin, Halyburton sketches with bold strokes his view of life apart from the saving revelation given to Christian faith.

> Sin is a transgression of a law, the highest law, the law of the supreme and righteous Governor of the world.... Sin contradicts the great design of man's being: ... for he pleases not God, but himself; and this is, what in him lies to frustrate God of the design he had in his work, and debase the being and powers given him for the honour of God, by employing them against him.... Sin misrepresents God.... Sin accuses God of want of wisdom and goodness in appointing laws which were not for his creature's good, and which he could not obey without detriment.... Finally, to crown all, sin dethrones God, and sets the creature in his room.[2]

In all this, Halyburton sees the fact of a cosmic rift between man and God, which affects his entire nature, inflicting a distorting myopia upon his vision of God, spending his spirit's energies in attaining false ends, disqualifying him from communion with God. This, obviously, is a developed

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1. Ibid., p. 466. Also, pp. 310-20. This is only an incidental argument; but if developed into a fixed principle, it would be entirely sceptical.

2. Ibid., p. 345-6.

theological view. Halyburton proceeds, however, as though he could by the survey of historical evidence establish the case. In this he may seem not entirely consistent, for his account of sin leaves little ground for believing that a sinful mind could ever be convinced of truth if it did not wish to believe. It must be borne in mind, however, that Halyburton does not disbelieve in the ability of "natural light" to reach the unregenerate mind, and make possible some glimpse of the truth. The "insufficiency" of that light does not preclude its being made the basis of an appeal to the true Light of the World, revealed to Christian faith.

If Halyburton's account of natural religion has little in common with that either assumed or elaborately demonstrated by rationalists--such as Locke, his view of faith and revealed religion also has little in common with theirs. This is made quite clear in the Essay Concerning the Nature of Faith. The performance of miracles and the fulfillment of prophecies are, according to Locke, the sure marks of revelation from God; and where these are present, faith is bound to give its assent. In the "full and clear Evidence and Demonstration of miracles," the Messiah, His forerunners, and His followers declared God's truth. Halyburton repudiates this view.

> "The faith of the scriptures' divine authority is not founded on this, that they by whom they were written, did, by miracles, prove they were sent of God." ... It will sufficiently confirm it to observe, (I) That many are, and were in duty obliged to yield this assent to, and believe the scriptures, who saw not these miracles. (II) We are no other way sure of these miracles being wrought, than by the testimony of the word. (III) This way is not countenanced by the word: for it no where teaches us to expect miracles as the ground of our assent.[1]

On the supposition that miracles had first to be performed and authenticated before any deliverance of the apostles could be accepted as revelation, Halyburton points out that

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1. Ibid., pp. 530-1.

> They who heard them, and saw miracles, could not be obliged to assent unto their doctrine, until by reasoning they would have time to satisfy themselves, how far natural causes might go towards the production of such effects, and how far these things, admitting them to be supernaturnatural, could go toward the proof of this, that what they delivered was from God.[1]

Human sin being what it is, Halyburton holds that a firmer foundation must be provided for belief. And this he finds in the nature of faith, and in the developed Confessional doctrine of the testimonium Spiritus Sancti Internum. Whatever force Hume's observations on miracles would later have upon the theological development of England, they did not alter the course of Scottish theology, whose view of revelation had an entirely different basis.

Halyburton's doctrine of faith is that of the Confession, but he places it in juxtaposition with Locke's philosophical principles. According to Locke, the human mind has three channels to a knowledge of existence. "Besides these, he admits no other objective light or evidence that may be a just ground of assent; and adds, 'That to talk of any other, is to put ourselves in the dark; yea in the power of the prince of darkness, and turn Enthusiasts.'" While Halyburton vigorously denies the odious charge of "enthusiasm," he asserts that there is yet a fourth channel to a knowledge of existence, "which depends upon the testimony of credible witnesses" and is called faith. And when knowledge of this sort rests upon the testimony of God Himself, it is called divine faith. The "objective" Word of God and the "subjective" response of man stand then in a reciprocal relation which is supernatural, miraculous, wholly dependent on God's agency, and lies beyond intuition, demonstration, or sensation.

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1. Ibid., p. 513. Hume was to elaborate the logic of this view.
2. Ibid., p. 517.
3. Ibid., p. 505.

> When it is inquired, wherefore do ye believe, receive, assent to, and rest in the Scriptures as indeed the word of God, and not of man? I answer, I do believe them, because they carry in them, to my faith, an evidence of God, or do evidence themselves by their own light and power to my faith duly exercised about them, that they are the word of God, and not of man.[1]

Faith, accordingly, is a form of knowledge. It is knowledge dependent upon personal relationship which exists where there is evident veracity on the one side, and trust in that veracity on the other. Where the relation is between God and man, the knowledge is imparted by One who lives beyond the sphere of sin and disorder; it comes to men in league with the gracious power of the Spirit, enabling assent and transforming human nature. For Halyburton, faith itself is the primary and inward miracle that makes outward miraculous proof irrelevant and superfluous.

> It enters into the conscience; .. challenges, convinces, threatens, weakens, sets it a roaring, and the creation cannot quiet it again.... It enters into the mind, opens its eyes, ... sets before it wonders unknown, and undiscerned in counsel and knowledge concerning God, ourselves, our sin, our duty, our danger, and our relief, the works, the ways, the counsels and purpose of God. It speaks to the will, converts it, and powerfully disengages it from what it was most engaged to. ... It enters the affections, makes them rise from the ground, ... (and) point heavenward.[2]

Space will not allow further consideration of Halyburton, of his personal influence upon the development of Scottish Confessionalist thought, or of a possible direct influence of Confessionalism upon David Hume. Unfortunately, much must be left for later investigation. What is evident, however, is the vast gulf that separates Scottish Confessionalism from the account of religion given by the rationalists. The environment in which David Hume first thought and moved was charged with hostility to the assumptions on which Locke's form of demonstrative theism

1. Ibid., p. 532.
2. Ibid., p. 535.

was founded. Moreover, it is of the first importance that this hostility was not solely a matter of dogmatic pronouncement--although the statement of the Confession on the matter of natural light was available to all. Halyburton, and those who endorsed his argument, were evidently of the opinion that the insufficiency of natural light could be argued from historical evidence--from the observation of what mankind has actually been able to know of God apart from the Christian revelation. In some particulars, he anticipated vaguely arguments that Hume was later to employ against natural religion with devastating effect. It does not seem to lie beyond the realm of credibility, therefore, that Hume should think his philosophy reconcilable with the Confessional account of what man may know of himself and God apart from Christian revelation. If Scottish orthodoxy could throw so dark a cloud of doubt upon human nature, it should not shrink from a philosophy that reaches like conclusions, though in a more precise form. If Scottish orthodoxy could make <u>faith</u> the sole and sufficient foundation of a positive religious conviction, it should not brand his statements to the same effect as cynical. It should not, but it did--perhaps quite inconsistently.

In order to give this conjectural rendering of Hume's thoughts and motives greater clarity and force, it is necessary to turn now to a closer study of the system of "modified scepticism." In passing from Halyburton, however, there is a remark in the <u>Colloquia Peripatetica</u> of the revered "Rabbi" Duncan which indicates something of Halyburton's mind. He writes,

> There are three biographies of which I never tire:-- Augustine's, Bunyan's, and Halyburton's. The first is by far the deepest, the second the richest and most genial, and with Halyburton I feel great intellectual congruity. He was naturally a sceptic, but God gave the sceptic great faith.[1]

1. p. 73

The judgment is borne out in Halyburton's theological writings. The intellectual affinity between these two devout Scotsmen may perhaps indicate a cast of mind or bent of environment which, translated into the form of rational philosophy, is scepticism. It seems not to have been an uncommon thing in Scotland, even during the ascendency of Confessional orthodoxy.

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When David Hume is contrasted with Thomas Halyburton, there is obvious truth in Professor Kemp Smith's remark that Hume's inborn temperament "cut him off from what, in Calvinist teaching, was the sole gateway through which religion could be approached--the experience of that religious type of inner division and self-conflict which was entitled the consciousness of sin."[1] Of self-conflict, Hume knew nothing--at least, after his early years. Sin was never his problem, either as a private individual or as a philosopher. If religious conviction may be gauged by a manifest concern about sin, Hume was evidently an irreligious man. This, no doubt, was the logic of his hostile contemporaries.

And yet it does not follow that Hume's mind, his appraisal of religious truth, or the philosophy of human nature expressing the principles on which his thinking depended, were influenced only by <u>reaction</u> to his Confessionalist environment. Whatever else Hume might have denied to Halyburton, obviously he did possess a "human nature," and a view of human nature that was given practical expression in the life of Calvinist Scotland. This view included a recognizable disposition of mind, which

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1. <u>Hume's Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion</u> (London, 1947), p. 1. This edition of the <u>Dialogues</u> was first published in 1935, before Professor Smith completed his critical study of Hume's philosophy. It is to be regretted that he did not, in the second edition, revise his estimate of Hume's views on religion in the light of his reinterpretation of Hume's philosophy.

was in striking contrast to the rationalist temper of John Locke. It was a mind accustomed to inner division, and in religious matters to the contrast between the insufficiency of man's highest wisdom and the unsearchable wisdom of God. Hence, it was a mind not disposed to allow the highest concerns and ends of life to be determined by close logical argument or demonstration. Whatever values such demonstration might be thought to exhibit, they were not paramount. The last word belonged to faith. Hume's philosophy professed to be an objective inquiry into the principles that actuate and explain human nature; his method was to be descriptive and "experimental." "As the science of man is the only solid foundation for the other sciences," he wrote in the introduction to the Treatise, " so the only solid foundation we can give this science itself must be laid on experience and observation."[1] This in the first instance would mean the experience and observation of his own countrymen, their nature, and their mind. He was aware, of course, of their many idiosyncrasies. He had no sympathy for "enthusiasm" and "fanaticism" in Scottish religion. But was he not a Scotsman after all? Could he, with noble philosophic resolve, eliminate all "Scoticisms" and "Confessionalisms" from his view of human nature? And did he? Or might his doctrines have some affinities with the thinking of Calvinist Scotland? There is the significant fact that throughout the period of his greatest philosophic productivity culminating in the publication of the two Enquiries, Hume himself believed his philosophy was reconcilable with the canons of Scottish orthodoxy.

In view of the central importance Hume attributed to his "science of man," it is necessary first to outline his attempt to establish a new

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1. p. xx.

"system of the sciences" on a "foundation almost entirely new, and the only one upon which they can stand with any security."[1] For in the "system of the sciences," Hume expressly included natural religion.

The interpretation of Hume is a perennial strain upon academic philosophy, although the usual treatment is to place him at the end of a blind alley leading from Descartes, Locke, and Berkeley. Professor Kemp Smith, however, in his volume on The Philosophy of David Hume, has taken a different tack. He finds the clue to Hume's doctrine in the moral philosophy of Francis Hutcheson, and maintains that Hume arrived at his most distinctive views "through the gateway of morals" rather than from the reduction of Locke's empirical principles. He regarded what are usually termed "theoretical judgments" in the same light as Hutcheson had regarded "moral judgments."

> What is central in his teaching is not Locke's or Berkeley's 'ideal' theory and the negative consequences, important as these are for Hume, which follow from it, but the doctrine that the determining influence in human, as in other forms of animal life, is feeling, not reason or understanding, i. e., not evidence whether a priori or empirical, and therefore also not ideas--at least not 'ideas' as hitherto understood. 'Passion' is Hume's most general title for the instincts, propensities, feelings, emotions and sentiments, as well as for the passions ordinarily so called; and belief, he teaches, is a passion. Accordingly the maxim which is central in his ethics--'Reason is and ought to be the slave of the passions'--is no less central in his theory of knowledge, being there the maxim: 'Reason is and ought to be subordinate to our natural beliefs'.[2]

It is not possible here to resketch Professor Smith's philosophic portrait of Hume in detail, or indicate the nature of his indebtedness to Hutcheson--who, as it happened, was a Scottish clergyman of the Moderate party. This has been done in great detail by Professor Smith, and in a fair and convincing way. The acceptance of his conclusion carries with it an important

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1. Ibid., p. xx.
2. N. K. Smith, The Philosophy of David Hume (London, 1941), p. 11.

modification of the long-established view: Hume's philosophy in certain fundamental respects dissociated itself from the Locke-Berkeley tradition, and was not simply its futile conclusion. Beside the sceptical reduction of Locke's notions of "substance," "causation," and the like, there is a positive doctrine. It indicates that theoretical as well as moral and aesthetic judgments are determined by an "absolute and uncontroulable necessity" of Nature, which overshadows reason and is inpenetrable to it. Though reason can produce no evidence or demonstration to show why the mind must believe in personal identity, an independent objective reality, or a necessary relation of cause and effect, Nature places such questions beyond the reach of crippling doubt.[1] And in consequence, "Reason is and ought to be subordinate to our natural beliefs."

If this is the case, then clearly reason cannot occupy the same central place in Hume's view of human nature that it is assumed to have in Locke's. Somehow, it is set over against another and more comprehensive faculty, whose "most general title"--as Professor Kemp Smith indicates--is "passion." And when Hume's works are canvassed to discover in what relation reason stands to "passion" in various instances, their disparity becomes quite evident. They appear to be two distinct functions, whose ideal relations may not be determined with precision, though to all practical ends, passion is ascendent. There would seem to be at the center of Hume's thinking a division which might appropriately be called a double-mindedness. The three-fold ambiguity of this term has some merit, for in its reference to the content of Hume's philosophy, it suggests the fundamental bi-polarity that distinguishes his thought from the "gnosticism" of Locke's; in its reference to Hume the philosopher, it suggests the

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1. "Nature, by an absolute and uncontroulable necessity has determin'd us to judge as well as to breathe and feel." Treatise I, IV, I (p. 183).

uneasy balance between the man given to devastating theoretical analysis and the man bent upon the improvement of general tastes and sentiments; and in its reference to the intellectual and moral integrity of the philosopher it recalls the charge of duplicity, which--rightly or wrongly, has been made against him from various quarters. The affinity of all three references further suggests that three distinguishable problems in the interpretation of Hume are actually one, and a correct understanding of his mind will be decisive in each case. Above all, it will shed a clearer light upon Hume's convictions as to religion. What, then, is the nature of this "double-mindedness" which Professor Kemp Smith's reinterpretation suggests? What are the functions of reason and passion? And how are they related to one another?

(a) As for reason, Professor Kemp Smith has emphasized a distinction that Hume himself made as to the uses of the term--though he is not always careful to indicate which of the two meanings apply. Reason for Hume is synonomous with reasoning, and "All reasonings may be divided into two kinds, namely, demonstrative reasoning, or that concerning matter of fact and existence."[1] The first sense of the term--reasoning as analytic and formally demonstrative--is for Hume reason strictly so called. Reasonings concerning "matters of fact and existence," on the other hand, are distinct; and it will be found that Hume treats them as being within the sphere of passion. To distinguish the second kind of reasoning from the first, he frequently designates the latter as "moral reasoning"--creating further difficulty for his interpreters by using "moral" in this extraordinary sense. But "reason" is usually "demonstrative reason."

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1. Enquiry, IV, II (p.35) Cf. N.K. Smith, The Philosophy of David Hume (London, 1941), pp. 99-102.

Hume follows Locke in holding that demonstrative reason is concerned with the relation of ideas within the perceiving mind, and that mathematics provides the perfect example of strict demonstrative knowledge. But in making this doctrine more precise than Locke had left it, Hume provides himself with a sharp instrument that will be used to whittle British empiricism to an insignificant remainder. First, he revises the distinction between sensation and reflection, putting in its stead the view that all knowledge is to be traced to perceptions. Perceptions are of two sorts: they are either immediate impressions or ideas—the latter differing from the former only in that they have less force and vivacity. Hume's account, clearly, is more precisely sensationalist than Locke's. But further, while Hume agrees that knowledge consists in determining the relations of ideas, he holds that demonstrative knowledge is necessarily limited to the reasonings of mathematics. Here only, in relating ideas of quantity and number, reason is able to reach a conclusion which is precise, clear, and cannot be challenged without involving thought in self-contradiction. This finality of mathematical demonstration, Hume attributes to the nature of the philosophic relation of "proportion in quantity or number," in accordance with which exact sciences may be constructed. Arithmetic, algebra, and perhaps geometry, are these sciences

> ... in which we can carry on a chain of reasoning to any degree of intricacy, and yet preserve a perfect exactness and certainty. We are possest of a precise standard, by which we can judge of the equality and proportion of numbers; and according as they correspond or not to that standard, we determine their relations, without any possibility of error.[1]

In mathematical reasoning, Hume finds the standard of perfect demonstration,

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1. Treatise, I, III, I (p. 71). Hume recognizes that the relations of resemblance, contrariety, and degrees in quality also allow of precise determination. But this is by immediate intuition. Demonstration is for Hume, as for Locke, a chain of intuitions.

which is not subject to contradiction, and to which rational assent must be given--when there is little occasion to doubt that the mind reaching it has not allowed error to slip in! Even mathematics can not escape the limitations imposed by human nature!

The marks of a perfect demonstration, exhibited by mathematical reasonings, are that it employs clear and precise ideas, involves nothing but the relation of those ideas, and reaches an exact conclusion which is decisive, and allows no contrary difficulty. This last is an essential and critical consideration.

> Nothing can be more absurd, than this custom of calling a difficulty what pretends to be a demonstration, and endeavouring by that means to elude its force and evidence.... A demonstration, if just, admits of no opposite difficulty; and if not just, 'tis a mere sophism, and consequently can never be a difficulty. 'Tis either irresistable, or has no manner of force.[1]

What Hume implies here is that, where reasoning reaches a conclusion that can be challenged without absurdity, there is no demonstration--and in the strict sense no "knowledge." Any professed demonstration may be tested by inquiring whether any possible alternative is conceivable without involving the mind in manifest contradiction: if there is even one, the conclusion is demoted to a probability, whose degree remains to be fixed according to certain practical rules. At this point, Hume is found to part company with Locke and the rationalists, who had sought to demonstrate the foundation principles of natural theology and morals. For Hume places the existence and attributes of God, as well as the nature of moral principles under the category of "matters of fact and existence." And for every conclusion as to such matters, there is always a crucial alternative that does not involve the mind in contradictions: that is, the supposition of its non-existence.[2]

1. Ibid., I, II, II (p. 31).

2. Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion, Part IX, p. 188 ff. (All quotations are from Professor Kemp Smith's edition of the Dialogues.)

Hume holds that all reasonings as to matters of fact or existence move in the realm of probabilities. They are analogical in character, and uniformly dependent upon the relation of cause and effect. On this view, the prospect of a theistic demonstration is entirely precluded. Philosophy can only determine as best it can--on the basis of the impressions and ideas of experience--the nature of the cause-and-effect relation; then it can reckon the probabilities relevant to belief in God and moral values. But these are matters of "moral reasoning," in the broad sense, and their proper place is within the domain of the passions. The sphere of demonstrative reasoning is limited strictly to mathematics.

(b) Passion, as Professor Kemp Smith points out, "is Hume's most general title for the instincts, propensities, feelings, emotions and sentiments, as well as for the passions ordinarily so called; and belief he teaches, is a passion."[1] In each instance, the function of the particular passion is to be contrasted with that of reason. It is dominant and active; reason is reflective and passive. It determines human nature in a practical way; reason is "cogitative," dispassionately considering whatever data may come into view. According to Hume's analysis, emotions, volitions, moral determinations, and beliefs as to matters of fact and existence are ossentially passional in character. They are non-rational.

Hume teaches that the "passions," in the ordinary and limited sense of "emotions," "feelings," "instincts," and the like, are in no way affected by reason. They are "impressions" and "impulses" excited by appropriate "objects," among which rational demonstrations are not numbered. Hume holds that it is meaningless to speak of a conflict between man's reason and his passions: they are simply discontinuous. Passions

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1. Supra, p. 47.

may be called unreasonable only through loose and inaccurate usage.[1]

Similarly, volitions which are closely related to "emotions" and "feelings" are uninfluenced by reason. In defining "will," Hume traces it to "The internal impression we feel and are conscious of, when we knowingly give rise to any new notion of our body, or new perception of our mind."[2] Will is uninfluenced by an reflective considerations. "It exerts itself, when, either the good or the absence of the evil may be attained by any action of the mind or body."[3] Its impulses are countermanded and controlled only by contrary impulses--not by dispassionate demonstrations of the rational.[4]

Further, Hume follows the lead of Hutcheson in his account of the "moral sentiments"--here used in the limited sense of "ethical determinations." Ethical judgments are said to depend upon natural sentiments--feelings akin to those of the aesthetic sense. Criticizing rationalist theories, Hume writes in the Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding:

> Why should not the acknowledgment of a real distinction between vice and virtue be reconcilable to all speculative systems of philosophy, as well as that of a real distinction between personal beauty and deformity? Both these distinctions are founded in the natural sentiments of the human mind; and these sentiments are not to be controlled or altered by any philosophical theory or speculation whatsoever.[5]

In this connection, Hume zealously repudiates rationalistic ethics, endeavoring to show that the root of moral sentiment is sympathy--which Sidgwick describes succinctly as "a fellow-feeling with the happiness and misery of others" which "furnishes a complete explanation of the approbation given

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1. Treatise, II, III, III (p. 415f).
2. Ibid., II, III, I (p. 399).
3. Ibid., II, III, IX (p. 439).
4. Cf. II, III, III, (pp. 413-18).
5. VIII, II (p.). Cf. also Treatise, III, I, I (pp. 455-470).

to the different qualities that make up our common notion of personal merit."[1] The moral faculty is sensitive, indigenous to human nature, and not affected by the demonstrations of reason.

The most revolutionary side of Hume's philosophy is, as Professor Kemp Smith shows, the attempt to place in the passional sphere all beliefs as to matters of fact and existence. His account of causation has long been recognized as the root of a thorough-going scepticism, which, when followed exclusively, paralyzes thought. In tracing the idea of causality, or of necessary connection, to a custom attendant upon the constant repetition of two events, Hume rules out the a priori principle that is the foundation of Locke's rational theology and metaphysic. What Hume's interpreters have generally missed is the positive intention behind his sceptical analyses.

> My intention ... in displaying so carefully the arguments of that fantastic sect (i.e., the Sceptics), is only to make the reader sensible of the truth of my hypothesis, that all our reasonings concerning causes and effects are deriv'd from nothing but custom; and that belief is more properly an act of the sensitive, than of the cogitative part of our natures.[2]

Professor Robert Flint, in his work on Agnosticism, has pointed out that Hume was the first among front-rank modern philosophers to analyze belief, and give it a place in his system of thought.[3] Its place is an important one, and in works of Scottish thought down through the nineteenth century remains so. The development of Scottish philosophy may justly be measured in terms of the development of the doctrine of belief. As it is propounded in Hume, it is a natural disposition of man's sensitive nature, a "lively idea related to or associated with a present impression."[4] When

1. Henry Sidgwick, Outlines of the History of Ethics, p. 207.
2. Treatise, I, IV, I (p. 183).
3. (Edinburgh, 1903), Chapter IV, sections I-III.
4. Treatise, I, III, VII (p. 96). Belief, Hume indicates with great significance, is akin to dreams and imaginings, but differs from them in having a superior force and vivacity.

the analytic powers of the mind are focused upon the world of fact and existence, Hume finds that philosophic notions of long standing--"causality," "material or spiritual substance," "personal identity," and the like--are completely incommensurable with demonstrative reason. But he does not construe this to mean the end of philosophy. He takes it rather to indicate that the only valid method in philosophy is an experimental one, which anatomizes natural beliefs, and renders them more precise by observing the constant sequence in which they are related to appropriate events. By scrutinizing the constant conjunction of beliefs and the objects of belief, he holds it possible to calculate the degree of probability to be attached to them. This is the nature of "moral reasoning." And while there is an absolute gulf fixed between its highest probabilities and the certainties of demonstrative reason, there is a sense in which the one may be said to approach the other as its ideal limit.[1]

Enough has perhaps been said to show what Hume understands by reason and passion, and to indicate the great disparity between these two central functions of human nature. Before going on to ask what bearing these facts have upon his views of religion, it may well be asked whether Hume's "double-mindedness" is not patently false to human nature--the central fact of his philosophy. For analytic purposes he draws a line between reason and passion very heavily, and labors the point of their discontinuity. Has he not been false to it by failing to indicate the real unity of man's whole being?

Hume seems to have been quite aware that he had not--and could not--reconcile the demand of reason for absolute precision of thought with the active, "sensitive" character of passion. Each lays its own claims upon

1. Ibid., I, Sections II to XV. Also the first Enquiry, X, I (pp.110-12).

man; and though in all practical circumstances those of passion have the natural superiority, the claims of reason remain, and lead to quite different ends. And so, at the beginning of the Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding, Hume points out two species of philosophy--the one taking passion, and the other reason, for its chief guide. And yet, though Hume indicates no organic connection between them, they are cooperative functions within the unity of the human spirit. As in matters of belief, for example, passion and reason come into close relation, though it is of an ill-defined and uneasy sort. For though Hume affirms that "reason is and ought to be subordinate to natural beliefs," as Professor Kemp Smith has insisted, reason still has the all-important virtue of a fixed and precisely defined ideal of certainty. While passion has the natural title and prerogatives of a king, reason still holds the purse. The resulting dilemma introduces an uneasy discord into the whole area where the two functions meet. And it is here that Hume finds a place for "modified scepticism." To carry the court-figure further, the philosopher's task is to play the part of the "wise fool"-- the Shakespearean court jester--skillfully playing reason and passion against one another in the interests of a higher wisdom.

Hume himself, in various places throughout the Treatise and Enquiries, employs another figure that is perhaps more to his purpose.

> The anatomist presents to the eye the most hideous and disagreeable objects; but his science is useful to the painter in delineating even a Venus or an Helen. While the latter employs all the richest colors of his art, and gives his figures the most graceful and engaging airs; he must still carry his attention to the inward structure of the human body.... Accuracy is, in every case, advantageous to beauty, and just reasoning to delicate sentiment. In vain would we exalt one by depreciating the other.[1]

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1. Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding, Section I (p. 10).

Hume evidently intended the suggestion quite seriously that reason can dissect living and passional experience, in order to arrive at a stable experimental science of human nature possessing high accuracy and usefulness--a kind of philosophical anatomy. He did not intend, however, that this limited and rational phase of philosophy be made the whole of it. The further task, in the nature of the case allowing much less accuracy, is to classify the passions, and investigate them experimentally in a kind of philosophical physiology. And thus the two phases of philosophy are indispensible to one another--neither having the right to be called the whole of philosophy. Hume's interpreters have erred by placing him in the rationalist tradition and making his sceptical analysis serve as the whole of his doctrine.[1]

What now remains to be done is to view Hume's notions concerning religion in the light of this doctrine of human nature, with its unique "double-mindedness," and to indicate Hume's place in the development of Scottish religious thought. What was his outlook upon religion? To what did his philosophic principles lead him? Though the problem appears to be quite simple and direct, it is all-important to notice that for Hume, living in eighteenth century Scotland, but having cosmopolitan tastes in philosophy

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1. It may be noted in passing that the philosophic impasse between reason and passion corresponds to the distinction between Hume the sceptic, and Hume the moral philosopher and genial sophisticate. Speculative pursuits answer the claim of reason. The cultivation of a "thoroughbred" nature--of developed "tastes" and "sentiments" in manners, morals, friendships, literature, art, and aesthetics generally, answers to the more ample claims of passion. Moreover, Hume's alleged "duplicity"--particularly in regard to religion--would seem to spring from the same root. Though each specific charge of unworthy motives must be dealt with on its evidence, an apparent contradiction between his philosophic conclusions and his more "popular" utterances may be only another evidence of the impasse between the rational and passional side of the man. Hume's nature, after all, is probably the only perfect illustration of his philosophy of human nature.

and letters, it was not exactly simple. Two independent traditions of religious thought confronted him--English rationalist theology and Scottish Confessionalism. And so in deciding what his views were, it must be asked how rationalism and Confessionalism fare in relation to the doctrine of human nature. The answer in the first instance is clear: it undermines the intellecualist and "gnostic" assumptions on which Locke had constructed his rational theology as well as his particular doctrines. In the second instance, the answer is not so clear: Hume seems to have begun with something close to sympathy with the Confessional outlook, though the hostility of Confessionalists seems to have created doubts as to the adjustment of passion and reason among "religious" people. Consider each instance in turn.

(a) Hume's uncriticized philosophy accomplishes the all but complete subversion of rationalistic theology. It is inimical to deism no less than to Locke's theistic doctrine. The fact may be sketched briefly.

(i) As for the self, with which Locke's demonstration begins, Hume is in agreement only to the extent of holding that a science of human nature must be the foundation of the study of natural religion. "Experimental" analysis shows that the rational self supposedly known by immediate intuition dissolves into a succession of impressions and ideas, whose relations to one another are fully as mysterious and impenetrable as the gravitation of heavenly bodies. But while Hume denies rationalism its idea of self, and hence the security of its professed foundation, he assumes the passional belief in personal identity, and describes it.[1] Much that is said in the Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion reflects the conclusion that the rational principle in human nature is subordinate to

1. Treatise, I, IV, VI (p. 251ff). Also, in the Appendix (pp. 633-6), Hume expresses dissatisfaction with the account he has been able to give of personal identity.

another which is sensitive, non-rational, and "incogitable."[1]

(ii) Perhaps enough has been said already to indicate the grounds on which Hume rejects Locke's claim to have constructed a coercive theistic demonstration. The causal relation, and analogical reasonings based upon it, are traced to a customary disposition of the mind when confronted with the constant repetition of two contiguous events. If the existence and attributes of God are to be made a matter for argument, it can only be by means of analogical reasoning that can make no claim to a priori validity. In the essay "Of a Particular Providence and of a Future State"--which he included in the first Enquiry--and with more detail in the Dialogues, Hume exhibits the difficulties that plague any effort to disengage the analogical argument from the limitations of human nature. All the difficulties encountered in relating the disparate elements within man himself return to hinder the theistic demonstration.

(iii) But further, Hume places the doctrine of moral sentiments against the rationalist notion that moral imperatives may be traced back to logically coercive principles. If moral sentiments may be treated simply as a set of approvals and disapprovals, sensitive in character, the direct response of human nature to its personal environment, then demonstrative reason is simply incompetent to deal with moral questions. The afterworkings of this exclusion of reason appear in Hume's treatment of the moral attributes of God. In the Dialogues,[2] Philo judges God by the canons of approval and disapproval prevailing in his own eighteenth century society, and finds God wanting--no doubt a just conclusion. But the further conclusion that no moral attributes can reasonably be ascribed to God must be

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1. Cp. Part II (p. 147); Part IV (p. 158-164).
2. Part IX (esp. p. 212).

evaluated in the light of the radical separation of reason from the moral sentiments within human nature.

(iv) Finally, the rationalist doctrine of revelation becomes the object of Hume's criticism. He denies that revelation can be founded rationally upon testimony to the performance of miracles or fulfillment of prophecies (which is but another species of miracle). This is the summary conclusion drawn from the "moral reasonings" of the celebrated chapter, "Of Miracles." Hume defines a miracle as "a transgression of a law of nature by a particular volition of the Deity, or by the interposition of some invisible agent."[1] What his argument professes to show is the grounds for doubting any testimony concerning an alleged miracle, when alternative explanations, either of the miracle itself or the testimony of it, claim the weighty support of experience and the "laws of nature." Since by definition a miracle transgresses the laws of nature, it must obviously have the bulk of human experience against it, and consequently the balance of probability. Accordingly, whether miracles occur or not, Hume concludes that there is no rational compulsion whatsoever to believe a professed revelation because its declarer has been said to have performed one.[2]

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1. Enquiry, X, I, footnote (p. 115).

2. Hume contents himself with this somewhat limited conclusion because his empirical principles will not support a bolder one. He cannot deny outright the fact of an alleged "transgression of the law of nature" by the Deity. A categorical denial of any matter of fact or existence is not more legitimate than a categorical affirmation--when direct experience is not possible: in either case, only probabilities can be reckoned. Nor can he maintain that all testimony concerning miracles is ipso facto fallacious. To assert that majority testimony--however overwhelming--establishes an absolute norm for judging all particular testimonies is a principle that would reduce Hume's philosophic polemic to impotence, for his own conclusions would be overbalanced by the "natural law" of human "religiosity," "superstition," "ignorance," "deception," and the like. He limits his conclusion, therefore, supporting it with the further consideration that an actual transgression of the "laws of nature" is much more improbable than that the most honest man should be deceived. Enquiry X, I (p.115f).

Hume's rejection of rationalist theology could hardly be more thorough. He attacks its assumptions, its method, its conclusions. What remains? On Hume's uncriticized view, it is impossible to say that "Whatever is is rational," for the better part of man's most intimate experience cannot be brought under the hegemony of reason. Much less can it be said with Pope that "Whatever is, is right," for the moral sentiments are often shocked by the ways of man and Providence. The only generalization to which Hume seems to attribute the character of an a priori principle within the framework of precise philosophy is the statement, "Whatever is, is traceable to perception--to an impression or an idea." But speculative application of the principle is subordinated to the practical control of the passions. Clearly, if Hume's account of reason and passion goes unchallenged, nothing remains of Locke's rational theism. His philosophy was to be challenged, however, not only in England, but in Confessionalist Scotland.

(b) But how did Hume's "double-minded" philosophy of human nature affect Confessional thought? Or, more exactly, how did it affect Confessionalism at the point where philosophy and theology had met in the natural theology of men like Halyburton? On Hume's view, are "natural religion" and "natural theology" possible?--But this is evidently putting the question wrongly. Hume does not seem to have questioned their actuality: the whole evidence of man's religious history indicates a side of human experience that evidently is not contrary to nature. Philosophy's task is simply to analyze the beliefs that are recognized to be "religious." Do Hume's conclusions exclude the Confessionalist view, as they do the rationalist?

Hume himself apparently did not think that they did--at least not until unfortunate experiences evidently changed his estimate of the religious passion. Most of Hume's interpreters maintain that his only relation toward Scottish Confessionalism was one of intellectual disdain and emotional antipathy. But in the light of all the evidence now accumulated, this would seem to be unjustified. Though any sympathies he may have had with Scottish religious life were undoubtedly of a very imperfect kind, there would still seem to be an important alternative view to the prevailing one. That is, Hume's general philosophy, and his conclusions as to religion, reflect his Scottish Confessionalist background; his place in the development of religious thought will be rightly determined only when this is taken into account. Support for this view may be found in Hume's writings and biography. It may be summed up by noting a few fundamental similarities between Hume's philosophy of human nature and the relevant parts of Confessionalist thinking, as expressed in Halyburton. It is entirely probable that Hume borrowed nothing consciously from Confessionalist theologians; what influence there was came at another level.

(i) Both Hume and the Confessionalist reject the religious application of English rationalism. In both instances, positive convictions emerge in express contradiction to fundamental rationalistic positions. Of this, enough has already been said.

(ii) But further, both Hume and the Confessionalist agree that all questions of natural theology are to be approached through the study of human nature--through the determination of what man can do and know from what he actually has done and known. Beside the statement that the problem of natural theology is "not concerning the works of God but concerning us" may be set the other statement that natural religion is

"in some measure dependent on the science of MAN." Hume's "experimental" method and his later resort to the "natural history of religion" were dimly and distantly foreshadowed in the historical studies of Halyburton. --There is, of course, the fact that Hume was among the first Scotsmen to be in touch with Enlightenment humanism, which might seem to make the association with Halyburton irrelevant. But however large Hume's debt to the new humanism, it must not be overlooked that he uses his "science of man," as Confessionalism its anthropology, against the English form of the Enlightenment. And through doctrines which in a rationalist setting become the height of scepticism, he achieved fame or notoriety in the esteem of the eighteenth century.

(iii) Moreover, both Hume and the Confessionalist teach that the foundations of religion are non-rational--if the measure of rationality is the natural reason of man. According to Halyburton, revelation stands in sharp contrast to reason's limited, confused deliverances about God, religious duty, and the highest good of man. Revelation alone sets before the mind "wonders unknown and undiscerned in counsel and knowledge concerning God, ourselves, our sin, our duty, our danger, and our relief." While there is nothing in Hume to compare to Halyburton's developed doctrine of revelation, there is the same insistence that the roots of religion are not in demonstrative reason. According to Hume, faith is religious belief, occasionally referred to as a "sentiment" or "passion." It is grounded in the passional side of human nature--as are moral sentiments and beliefs in general. It is not only capable of affecting practical life--as speculative notions of the Deity cannot--but this is its chief function. "The proper office of religion is to reform men's lives, to purify their hearts, to enforce all moral duties, and to secure obedience to the laws and civil

magistrate."[1] The Natural History of Religion develops this view in a different way, by showing the association of historical religions with the passions--understood here in both the broad and narrow sense. Even Philo, the persistent sceptic of the Dialogues, is allowed to speak of a "sense of religion impressed upon the mind" by the "inexplicable contrivance and artifice of nature," and can acquiesce in a shadowy theism despite his own determined reasoning to the contrary. This is in keeping with the principle that "reason is, and ought to be, subordinate to the passions, or to the natural beliefs." And this, in turn, is in keeping with the anti-rationalist orientation of Confessionalism, although it should be borne in mind that Halyburton does not exclude reason from the sphere of religion--as Hume tends to do. Rather, he holds that it has been disordered by sin, but may be restored to true rationality through faith and revelation.

(iv) Further, both Hume and Halyburton make free use of arguments which, if given the status of rational principles, would be entirely sceptical. A few instances of Confessionalist scepticism have been noted. They are neither as penetrating, nor as numerous, as the ingenious reasonings of Hume. But they certainly amount to the same thing and are supported by similar views of religious history. No more appropriate summary of Halyburton's argument against Lord Herbert's deistic reading of religion can be found than this passage from Hume's Natural History of Religion:

> Survey most nations and most ages. Examine the religious principles, which have, in fact, prevailed in the world. You will scarcely be pursuaded, that they are any thing but sick men's dreams: Or perhaps will regard them more as the playsome whimsies of monkeys in human shape, than the serious, positive, dogmatical asseverations of a being, who dignifies himself with the name of rational.[2]

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1. From an apologetic Preface, intended for one of Hume's historical volumes, but later reduced to a footnote. Cf. Burton, op. cit., II, p.11.
2. Section XI (Included in Hume Selections, ed. by C. W. Hendel,Jr., p.282).

The most important respect in which Hume's historical study differs from Halyburton's is his failure to exclude Christianity from the generalizations upon "popular religion." By implication, all religion that does not understand itself in the light of philosophic analysis and fails to recognize its dependence on the science of man is of an unworthy sort. It is not only non-rational, but essentially irrational--an arbitrary, abortive amalgum of passion and reason. But this broadening of Hume's distrust of religion, which is a mark of his later works, seems to have a close connection with the hostility of the orthodox opponents of his philosophy. In a sense, Hume represents the scepticism of Scottish Confessionalism turning back upon itself: the effort to discredit all non-Christian, and even extra-Confessional, religions is easily turned against religion in general.

These, then, are a few fundamental similarities between Hume's philosophy and the relevant parts of Halyburton's theological outlook. Taken at face value, they support the contention that Hume could, and did, for some time think his doctrine reconcilable with the Confession of the Scottish Church. If Halyburton's teachings could be accepted as a tolerable exposition of its statement concerning the insufficiency of natural light, it is possible to see how Hume might teach the whole of the Treatise or the Enquiries in a Scottish University, without violating his conscience. He evidently felt justified in asking the same intellectual allowances for himself that had been granted freely to Confessional thinkers whose scepticism was bold, though vague.[1]

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1. In the Treatise, Hume expresses surprise that his views have aroused not only "metaphysicians, logicians, mathematicians," but "even theologians." I, IV, VII (p. 264).

This, of course, does not mean that Hume was right in thinking his philosophy could be reconciled with the vital and positive religion of a man like Halyburton. He shared none of the deep religious, and specifically Christian convictions, that are the essence of the Westminster Confession. His thinking upon questions of religion is given no positive force or content. He is the detached observer par excellence, who accepts the verdict that man's natural reason is incapable of reaching a significant and saving knowledge of God, and in consequence confines his interests to nature--that which may be experienced immediately by the five senses. His thought is thus primarily a form of "naturalism." The positive side of Hume's religious view--that religion is basically passional--in effect makes faith simply a matter of temperament, which may be cultivated or not, in the same way that an "artistic temperament" may be developed or ignored. Hume chose not to cultivate whatever of religious inclination he may have had. This thorough-going humanistic tendency in the philosophy of Hume brings him into close touch with the Enlightenment--whose influence he certainly felt, and which he profoundly influenced in return.

But for all his debt to the Englightenment, Hume was essentially a Scottish thinker; and this is the vital point in estimating his place in Scottish intellectual history. His roots were Scottish. If he followed the Locke-Berkeley tradition in philosophy, it was mainly to deflate its intellectual authority, in order to make room for a new system of his own--a "double-minded" philosophy much closer to the springs of Scottish thought than to those of the English Enlightenment. To call Hume "the last of the deists" has little meaning. With greater justice he might be said to represent the complete naturalization, or secularization, of the Confessional view of man--in much the same way that deism is the thorough naturalization

of Locke's theistic rationalism. But even this is too facile. It must suffice to say that the human nature at the center of his thought--his major concern--is suspiciously Scottish; and in the forming of this national character, Scottish Calvinism had no small part.

Historians of thought have been right in maintaining that in Hume, the Enlightenment at last arrives in Scotland, some fifty years after it had triumphed in England and on the continent. But it is evident that this statement must be supplemented, in a number of ways. (i) The Scottish form of the Enlightenment was in a significant sense unique--standing upon a different footing. And Hume's quarrel with Scottish theology did not center upon the matter of rational demonstration, but on the account of human nature. (ii) Hume's scepticism moved Scottish religious thinkers deeply--as the Deistic Controversy never had--largely because it could with considerable justice claim kinship with the accepted apologetic of the older orthodoxy. Obviously, a <u>proved insufficiency</u> of the natural mind to reach a <u>rational knowledge of God</u> does not guarantee a further interest in the sufficiency of Christianity. It is more directly a step toward the practical repudiation of religion. (iii) And further, if Scottish thinkers found it necessary to condemn Hume's doctrine of human nature as incompatible with a religious view of life, the more discerning saw that the old Confessionalist apologetic suffered equally, and as a spiritual instrument could be a serious liability. Thus at the very time England was growing thoroughly weary of its Deistic Controversy, the problems of relating Christian faith to natural knowledge and natural religion were just beginning to agitate the Scottish mind. David Hume's philosophy raised questions, to which the succeeding development of Scottish natural theology and theism provided answers. Like Hume's doctrines, the answers generally revolved about the question of human nature.

CHAPTER II

MEDIATING PHILOSOPHY AND NATURAL THEOLOGY

A moderate estimate of man's powers of thought and action carries with it, of necessity, a moderate view of man's ability to achieve for himself a final certainty as to the character, and even the existence, of God. Perhaps the first question to be asked of anyone holding such a moderate estimate of man is whether his view rests on principle or on convenience--on clear, consistent thinking or on facile compromise. In considering the origin and first growth of Scottish demonstrative theism, there can be no doubt as to the fact that it presupposed a "mediating philosophy" consciously distinct from the rationalist elements of Locke's teaching on the one hand, and from the "modified scepticism" of Hume's on the other. But before the history of the development can be written with discernment, something must be said about the principles with which it began. In general, it is apparent that the new philosophy and the new natural theology resulted from an honest, circumspect effort to out-think Hume, and to found all thought and science upon a less sceptical account of human nature, without yielding to the unsupported "gnosticism" of Locke. The mediating position was rooted in a few fairly consistent principles.

The verdict of the "Scottish School" upon the development of philosophy and theology down to the time of Hume is well expressed in a passage by Thomas Reid which deserves to be quoted at length. It reveals the new temper of Scottish thought as well as something of the reasoning that led to the mediating position.

> Extremes of all kinds ought to be avoided; yet men are prone to run into them; and, to shun one extreme, we often run into the contrary.
>
> Of all extremes of opinion, none are more dangerous than those that exalt the powers of man too high, on the one hand, or sink them too low, on the other.
>
> By raising them too high, we feed pride and vainglory, we lose the sense of our dependence upon God, and engage in attempts beyond our abilities. By depressing them too low, we cut the sinews of action and of obligation, and are tempted to think that, as we can do nothing, we have nothing to do, but to be carried passively along the stream of necessity.
>
> Some good men, apprehending that to kill pride and vainglory, our active powers cannot be too much depressed, have been led, by zeal for religion, to deprive us of all active power.
>
> Other good men, by a like zeal, have been led to depreciate the human understanding, and to put out the light of nature and reason, in order to exalt that of revelation.
>
> Those weapons which were taken up in support of religion, are now employed to overturn it; and what was, by some accounted the bulwark of orthodoxy, is become the stronghold of atheism and infidelity.
>
> Atheists join hands with Theologians in depriving man of all active power, that they may destroy all moral obligation, and all sense of right and wrong. They join hands with Theologians in depreciating the human understanding, that they may lead us into absolute scepticism.[1]

Reid's verdict was that of a minister of the Church of Scotland, who was also a leading Scottish philosopher in the latter half of the eighteenth century, second only to Hume. He was a member of the Moderate party which was responsible, not only for a marked change within the church--away from the strict Confessional piety of men like Halyburton, but also for the sudden eminence that Scotland attained in many branches of the arts and sciences. Voltaire somewhere remarked, with truth equal to his sarcasm: "It is an admirable result of the progress of the human

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1. The Works of Thomas Reid (ed. by Sir William Hamilton: Edinburgh, 1846), pp. 635-6. Professor Kemp Smith has pointed out (Philosophy of David Hume, pp. 3-8) that Reid was largely responsible for the ordinary interpretation of Hume--that his philosophy amounts to atheism and complete scepticism. That this was Reid's view is apparent in the passage above. That it rested on a misunderstanding of Hume is true. Nevertheless, it was an honest misunderstanding, and one which others who might be thought more sympathetic to Hume's position have shared. Moreover, Reid never disparaged the force of Hume's arguments, but met them critically.

spirit that at the present time it is from Scotland that we receive rules of taste in all arts from poetry to gardening." This was to no small degree the achievement of Scottish clergymen, who excelled more perhaps in their extra-clerical occupations than in the ordinary service of the ministry. But it was to be expected in a land whose life and thought had been long and vigorously formed by Churchmen, that no radical change could take place without their active cooperation. In order to set the views of Reid and the Scottish School in clearer light, a few preliminary facts may be indicated concerning Moderatism in general, and its relation to the English Enlightenment.

The characteristics of the Moderate mind are not difficult to find. Tolerance was perhaps its most obvious and public virtue--a check upon the Confessionalist determination to enforce God's cosmic policy against any opposition whatsoever. And closely associated with it was a new intellectual liberality--a willingness to hear out and learn from views opposed, or even hostile, to Christian belief, be they of a "free-thinker", or a deist, or a sceptic. A notable example of this was Dr. Hugh Blair's defense of David Hume, when Confessionalists tried to arraign him before the General Assembly of the Church in 1755. On that occasion, Blair wrote a significant argument in Hume's defense:

> The freedom of inquiry and debate, tho' it may have published some errors to the world, has undoubtedly been the source from whence many blessings have flowed upon mankind.... The proper objects of censure and reproof are not freedom of thought, but licentiousness of action; not erroneous speculations, but crimes pernicious to society.[1]

Moral earnestness also was a particular mark of the Moderate. Though Covenanting piety had always accented the moral demands of the Gospel,

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1. Observations Upon a Pamphlet, intitled "An Analysis of the Moral and Religious Sentiments contained in the Writings of Sopho (i.e., Lord Kames) and David Hume, Esq.," (published anonymously; Edinburgh, 1755) pp. 1-2.

its preaching and instruction had a decidedly dogmatic stamp. Moderates reversed the emphases, dealing more with questions of personal morality than with creed or doctrine.[1] At the same time, an enthusiasm for the humanities--for classical learning and the arts--displaced the Confessionalist preoccupation with purely theological studies. And this included an interest in philosophy for its own sake, without holding it to very limited service in the interest of faith.[2]

Moderatism clearly illustrates the fact that the Enlightenment, in some of its aspects at least, had won enthusiastic friends within the Scottish Church, and thereby deprived it of an insular status staunchly maintained by the Confessionalists. Various historical influences worked toward this end. The union of the English and Scottish Parliaments in 1707, and the thrust of subsequent political and economic events, had much to do with breaking down the wall of partition between Scottish church life and English church life--and so also between Scottish religious thought and English religious thought. Thus, a trend that gathered momentum over a period of fifty or more years came to its fruition around 1755. And from then until 1805, Moderatism prevailed in the Church, and brought the Scottish mind into intimate contact with the Enlightenment influences.[3]

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1. Cf. Adam Milroy, "The Doctrine of the Church of Scotland" in The Church of Scotland, Past and Present (Ed. by R. H. Story), Vol. IV, pp. 275-7.

2. Cf. "Jupiter" Carlyle's celebrated apostrophe to the Scottish Church and its accomplished clergy, which is an arresting, if immoderate, measure of their achievement. Quoted by A. J. Campbell, Two Centuries of The Church of Scotland, 1707-1929, pp. 98-9.

3. In 1805, the Moderates lost their leadership when they became involved in a dispute over the Chair of Mathematics in the University of Edinburgh, for rather questionable reasons. They evidently abandoned principles staunchly defended in 1755, when they succeeded in defending David Hume against the misconceived and partisan charges of the Confessionalists--signalizing their supremacy in the Church. Moderatism, however, was not a sudden growth. As early as 1714, when Professor John Simpson of Glasgow was tried for heresy (cf. Campbell, op. cit., pp. 42-44), there were signs that some windows in Scotland were open to new winds of doctrine. Francis Hutcheson and William Leechman, also in Glasgow, had leading parts in fostering the effort to "put a new face upon Theology in Scotland."

These broadly stated facts raise fundamental questions for the interpretation of Scottish intellectual history subsequent to Hume. Is there any continuity between the religious teaching of the Moderates and their Confessional predecessors? Is not the general temper and bent of the Moderate mind more akin to the spirit of Locke and the Enlightenment than to that of Halyburton? If so, are not those historians of thought right who maintain that the new interest in natural theology that developed with Moderatism was only an insignificant backwash of the English Deistic Controversy? --Were this the case, it should be expected that the advent of Moderatism would mean a thorough-going revision of the entire religious outlook of Scotland, bringing it into closer conformity to the rationalist theology of Locke, Clarke, Butler, and Paley. But this did not occur. There seems to have been little or no change in the previous adjustment of reason to faith. The structure of the prevailing view of religion was such that Moderates had a minimum of difficulty in reconciling their philosophy and wide-ranging interests in things distinctly human and humane with the established doctrine of the Church.

This can be illustrated in a number of ways. Throughout the fifty years of Moderate supremacy, the Westminster Confession remained the undisputed doctrinal standard of the Scottish Church. There is little evidence to show that the main body of Moderate opinion was consciously in rebellion against the Confession at any point, or desired fundamental changes in its credal statements. Controversies of this sort did not assume significant proportions until well into the nineteenth century.[1] It is certain, moreover, that Scotland's new-found philosophy--the "Common Sense Philosophy" of Reid--had no such effect on Scottish theology as Locke's rationalistic empiricism had previously had on English theology, or as Kant's

1. Cf. Adam Milroy, op. cit., p. 275ff; also Campbell, op. cit., pp. 100-102, 109-116.

Critical Philosophy was later to have on German theology. Indeed the professed claims of philosophy upon theology were not heeded in Scotland until the second half of the nineteenth century, when German Idealism became a powerful influence. An indeterminate relationship existed between Scottish philosophy and theology, even down to the time of Sir William Hamilton and Campbell Fraser, as is evident in this characterization of national thought by Professor Andrew Seth (Pringle-Pattison).

> Scottish philosophy has hardly anything to say on the question of the possibility of systematic philosophy, or, to give it its old name, the possibility of Ontology.... For their personal ontology, if we may so speak, (Scottish philosophers) simply fell back upon the language of religion, which relates God to the world as its Creator, and to man also as his Creator, and in a special sense, his Father and his God.[1]

More explicitly, the conception of the task of philosophy in the "Scottish School" was such that it did not conflict with the high doctrine of revelation embodied in the Westminster Confession. In all questions concerning the ultimate and Divine Reality, Reid and his followers recognized the need and the place of revelation. In consequence, Common Sense Philosophy and Confessional Theology are found side by side, dividing the labor of thought amicably between them, without any evident concern to define the rights or the limits belonging to each. Such matters are left ambiguous.

The indeterminacy of this relationship is itself an indication that Moderatism did not seriously alter the fundamental pattern of Scottish religious thought inherited from the Confessionalists. But, in place of the decidedly sceptical account of natural light that Halyburton for one had seen fit to place alongside a high doctrine of revelation, Reid substituted a positive doctrine--a philosophy whose conception of

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1. Scottish Philosophy (Edinburgh, 1885), pp. 213 & 216. The book was written before he had added to his original name that of "Pringle-Pattison."

its task and claims for its conclusions were moderate. They were moderate on principle.

The foundations on which the "mediating philosophy" and the new natural theology rest are set in clearest light by Thomas Reid. He may therefore be allowed to represent the "Scottish School" of philosophy.[1] Reid does not take up the study of natural theology per se, although frequently in passing he indicates what bearing his philosophic principle would have on theistic discussion. The intensive and extensive development of natural theology was reserved for the nineteenth century. The first full-fledged Scottish treatment of the subject was W. L. Brown's Burnet Prize Essay published in 1816, having the title On the Existence of a Supreme Creator.

Reid's philosophy begins with David Hume. In a letter to Hume, to whom he had submitted his Inquiry into the Human Mind before its publication, Reid indicates the nature of his indebtedness, and the direction in which his own thinking is turned.

> In attempting to throw some new light upon those abstruse subjects, I wish to preserve the due mean betwixt confidence and despair. But whether I have any success in this attempt or not, I shall always avow myself your disciple in metaphysics.... Your system appears to me not only coherent in all its parts, but likewise justly deduced from principles commonly received among philosophers; principles which I never thought of calling in question, until the conclusions you draw from them in the Treatise of Human Nature made me suspect the.[2]

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1. For my understanding of Scottish philosophy, I am indebted chiefly to the following works: James McCosh, The Scottish Philosophy; Henry Laurie, Scottish Philosophy in its National Development (Glasgow, 1902); Andrew Seth (Pringle-Pattison), Scottish Philosophy: A Comparison of the Scottish and German Answers to Hume; and A. Campbell Fraser, Thomas Reid.

2. The Works of Thomas Reid, p. 91. The underlining has been added to the text.

Reid begins with Hume by agreement and disagreement. He shares to the full the belief that the only sound foundation of all scientific or philosophic thinking is a science of man--by which, like Hume, he understands a science of the human mind. As a thinking animal, man is capable not only of experience in general, but of reflection upon his experience. He is not only capable of it, but is actively engaged in it at every moment of consciousness. And whatever the connection of the human mind with the ultimate springs of reality, it can engage in the effort to analyze and give an orderly account of its own capabilities and actions--which is the task of philosophy. In this Reid agrees with Hume. But he disagrees with what he takes to be Hume's wholly sceptical results, on the ground that they are inconsistent with human nature, and if taken seriously, must lead to the complete paralysis of thought and action--to philosophic and spiritual suicide. And since he cannot attribute Hume's bad results to flagrant violations of logic, Reid is led to re-examine the principles with which Hume began. And his investigations bring him to the "Philosophy of Common Sense." Hume's scepticism is to be refuted in toto, and wholly new foundations laid for philosophic discussion. This includes theistic discussion.

Professor Campbell Fraser has pointed out that there are two stages in the development of Reid's thought.[1] During the first, he is occupied with the refutation of the doctrine of "representative perception" --the view, as Reid puts it, that "nothing is perceived but what is in the mind which perceives it: That we do not really perceive things that are external, but only certain images and pictures of them imprinted upon the mind, which are called impressions and ideas."[2] During the second stage

1. Op. cit., pp. 95-102; 118-125. The two stages coincide roughly with his early career in Aberdeenshire and his professorship in Glasgow.
2. Reid, op. cit., p. 96.

of his development, Reid allows his earlier conclusions to lead into the larger question concerning "active power" and the "Causality which all changes in the universe presuppose"--changes in man himself and in his surroundings. At the earlier stage, Reid's interest is given somewhat exclusively to theoretical or speculative questions; at the later, to moral and spiritual questions. Nevertheless, Reid does not accept anything like Hume's distinction between reason and passion, between rational and passional functions. And while it is important to recognize the shifting interests in Reid's development, they are not mutually exclusive. The "speculative" and "active powers" of man, as he designates them, are intimately related in the comprehensive rationality of human nature. All human experience--from the simplest sense perception to the highest exercise of intellectual and moral powers--presupposes a few first principles, or rational judgments, or common sense beliefs.

> If there are certain principles, as I think there are, which the constitution of our nature leads us to believe, and which we are under a necessity to take for granted in the common concerns of life, without being able to give a reason for them--these are what we call the principles of common sense; and what is manifestly contrary to them, is what we call absurd.[1]

Reid holds that on the basis of these original and ultimate principles, with which every rational man is by nature endowed, it is possible to reach a certainty common to all men. It is a certainty, a conclusive knowledge, not limited to the relationing of ideas within the mind as Locke and Hume would have it, but reaching out to an objective reality beyond the knowing mind. Dualism and realism are terms often applied to Reid's philosophy, describing one aspect of his conclusions based upon the principles of common sense.

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1. Reid, op. cit., p. 108.

In attaching all human thought and experience to rational first principles, Reid alters the primary maxim of Hume's philosophy, that reason is, and ought to be, subordinate to the passions--in speculative matters, to natural beliefs. The principles of common sense--or "intellectual instincts," "implanted beliefs," "ultimate facts of consciousness" as Reid variously terms them--share certain characteristics that Hume evidently attributes to the several passions.[1] They have an immediacy analogous to that of sense perceptions. They cannot themselves be established by any rational demonstration, and in this sense are incomprehensible to discursive reason. They are original and natural, not the result of any other activity of consciousness. They are constitutive of human nature and determine all that is recognizably human. And so in some sense they may be regarded as universal and necessary--sufficiently so to make a philosophy of human nature profitable, intellectually and perhaps otherwise. Reid's "principles" have this much in common with Hume's "passions." But, Reid also describes them as "ultimate principles of knowledge," "primary axioms," "fundamental truths", "original judgments." And by these designations, he indicates the intimate connection of the common sense principles and reason.

> We ascribe to reason two offices, or two degrees. The first is to judge of things self-evident; the second to draw conclusions that are not self-evident from those that are. The first of these is the province, and the sole province, of common sense; and, therefore, it coincides with reason in its whole extent, and is only another name for one branch or one degree of reason.[2]

An earlier passage to the same effect may also be quoted:

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1. At this point, I am indebted to an article by Sir William Hamilton in his edition of Reid's works, entitled "The Nomenclature, that is the various appelations by which the principles of Common Sense have been designated." Op. cit., pp. 755-770

2. Ibid., p. 425.

> Such original and natural judgments are ... a part of that furniture which Nature hath given to the human understanding. They are the inspiration of the Almighty, no less than our notions or simple apprehensions. They serve to direct us in the common affairs of life, where our reasoning faculty would leave us in the dark. They are a part of our constituion; and all the discoveries of our reason are grounded upon them. They make up what is called the common sense of mankind.[1]

In making rational judgments central in his philosophy, instead of Hume's isolated impressions of sense, Reid maintains in effect that every aspect of human experience is shot through with an element of rationality. This is apparent in the extensive list of first principles that he gives, without claiming to have exhausted all possibilities. By introspective analysis, he arrives at a general classification that distinguishes between "First Principles of Contingent Truths" and "First Principles of Necessary Truths." The former are presupposed in all thought and discussion concerning truths that are "mutable, dependent upon some effect of will and power, which had a beginning, and may have an end."[2] The latter are presupposed as the axioms of the timeless and immutable truths, of which mathematical conclusions are invariably given as an example. Because the axioms of mathematics are abstract, precise, and the subject of universal agreement, Reid simply agrees with any who hold that the mathematical sciences are examples of perfect demonstration. But to the axioms of mathematics he adds grammatical axioms, logical axioms, axioms in matters of taste, moral axioms, and finally metaphysical axioms. These also are "first principles

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1. Ibid., p. 209.

2. Ibid., p. 441. Examples of "first principles of contingent truths" are these."(2) ...the thoughts of which I am conscious are the thoughts of a being which I call MYSELF, my MIND, my PERSON. (5) ...those things do really exist which we distinctly perceive by our senses, and are what we perceive them to be. (6) ...we have some degree of power over our actions, and the determinations of our will. (7) ...the natural faculties, by which we distinguish truth from error, are not fallacious. (12) ...in the phaenomena of nature, what is to be, will probably be like to what has been in similar circumstances." Cf. pp. 441-452. These correspond roughly with Hume's "beliefs concerning matters of fact and existence." They are the foundation of Reid's dualism, or realism.

of necessary truths." Reid holds that in each of these areas of human experience and concern, reasoning is possible. But it can proceed with assurance and certainty only when the appropriate first principles are acknowledged and agreed upon. Ultimate moral axioms must have assent before moral science is possible. The same holds true in matters of grammar, logic, taste, metaphysics, and therefore, of natural theology.

Aristotle probably deserves most credit for the conception of first principles held by Reid. It is only in the manner of establishing them that Reid indicates the distinctive character of his "Philosophy of Common Sense." In the nature of the case, first principles cannot be demonstrated: they are the presupposition of all demonstration, and must stand firm, if at all, because of their own inherent necessity. To find a higher warrant is impossible. Nevertheless, their right to be regarded as first principles may be established indirectly by showing that they are consistent with the universal nature of man, and that their denial would paralyze human thought and action. This is the homo mensura principle that informs the entire development of "the Scottish Philosophy" from Reid onward, but is first termed so only by Professor Campbell Fraser at the end of the nineteenth century.

In his study of Scottish Philosophy, Professor Seth (Pringle-Pattison) has pointed out that Reid was not guilty of a naive appeal to the general, uncritical consciousness of men to support his own philosophy, or of maintaining "in spite of philosophy" that vulgar common sense refutes Hume.

> So far from meeting Hume's conclusions by an unsupported reassertion of what was there sceptically explained away, Reid, admitting the formal correctness of the reasoning, set on foot a rigorous investigation into the premises or assumptions on which the conclusion depended.... No procedure could be more distinctively philosophical than this.[1]

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1. Seth, op. cit., p. 119.

Though Reid's philosophy is far less systematic and precise than Kant's Critical Philosophy, Professor Seth nevertheless finds it can worthily stand comparison with the Kantian achievement. Reid suggests three lines of reasoning that give philosophic stature to his discussion of first principles.[1] The first is ad hominem argument which labors the inconsistency of accepting some first principles while rejecting others which stand on the same footing in human consciousness, or of accepting them in one context while rejecting them in another. Hume's "double-minded" philosophy, as understood by Reid and the traditional interpreters, is full of contradictory denials and reaffirmations. The second is a proof ad absurdum, which traces the consequences of denying a first principle, and shows the absurdity involved in the denial.

> There is hardly any proposition, especially of those that may claim the character of first principles, that stands alone and unconnected. It draws many others along with it in a chain that cannot be broken. He that takes it up must bear the burden of all its consequences; and, if that is too heavy for him to bear, he must not pretend to take it up.[2]

While Reid makes no careful and systematic application of this suggestion, Professor Seth points out that it is very like Kant's method in the deduction of the "unity of apperception."[3] And the third line of reasoning about first principles is to consult the common consciousness of mankind, not simply by culling out random opinions, but by studying its concrete embodiment in the structure of language--in as much as "the structure of all languages is grounded upon common notions." Reid makes the fullest use of this third method of indirection, and makes the analysis of grammar

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1. Op. cit., pp. 439-41.
2. Ibid., p. 439
3. Seth, op. cit., pp. 120-1.

the main support of his doctrines. Professor Seth comments, "... if we reflect upon the closeness of the connection between grammar and the Aristotelian logic, the argument has manifest affinities with Kant's deduction of the categories from the forms of judgment."[1] In defense of the first principles on which his doctrine depends, Reid argues with vigor and insight, if not with systematic attention. The intent of his reasonings, somewhat like Kant's, is to establish these maxims of human consciousness as the foundation and norm of knowledge.

Yet, none of Reid's three ways of confirming first principles purports to give them the precision, clarity, and solidity that Kant attributes to the architectonic of his Critical Philosophy. In fact, he goes the length of allowing that "men who really love truth and are open to conviction" may differ about the exact nature and statement of first principles, because their minds have been swayed "by education, by authority, by party zeal, or by some other of the common causes of error."[2] It belongs to the principled moderateness of Common Sense Philosophy not to claim, even for its own foundation principles, an absolute freedom from the prejudices to which human nature is susceptible, or from the limitations of time, place, and history, by which it is bound. The first principle that informs all others--*primus inter pares*--asserts only the competence of the mind to acquire true knowledge commensurate with its "present state."

> Our intellectual powers are wisely fitted by the Author of our nature for the discovery of truth, as far as suits our present state. Error is not their natural issue, any more than disease is of the natural structure of the body. Yet, as we are liable to various diseases of body from accidental causes, external and internal; so we are, from like causes, liable to wrong judgments.[3]

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1. *Ibid.*, p. 124. Sir William Hamilton also compared Reid favorably with Kant. Cf. his edition of Reid, p. 715, footnote.
2. Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 468-75, for Reid's doctrine of error.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 468.

The aim of philosophy, accordingly, is to bring first principles to clear and precise consciousness, in so far as this may be done by a mind that recognizes its own finitude and susceptibility to error. Reid would undoubtedly have objected to any philosophy, professing in the name of "pure reason" to formulate the mind's first principles with exactitude, and measure its competence in an a priori manner. On his view, the discernment of pure first principles is the end of philosophy and not its beginning, its consummation and not its prolegomena. Reid is at odds with Kant not only in being a less systematic thinker, but in rejecting the element of "confident" rationalism evident in the Critical Philosophy.[1]

By way of summary--Reid's "due mean betwixt confidence and despair" is a mediating philosophy founded on rational but indemonstrable first principles common to all men. The first duty of the inquiring mind is to be consistent with itself and its kind--to allow as true only that which is consonent with its own constitutive principles, and deny as false only that which, if allowed, would paralyze its own rational processes. How, then, does the characterization of first principles in Reid, and in Scottish philosophy after him, throw light upon the new natural theology? That is, what force do the theistic proofs carry when translated into an intellectual environment shaped by a mediating philosophy? There is the

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1. Cf. Professor Campbell Fraser's summary of Reid's teaching: "Reid's Common Sense is the final perception of a being who can know the universe of reality only in part, and is therefore needed by man in the intermediate position in which an absolute beginning or end of things must be to him incomprehensible.... Although its judgments are not evolved from premises, they are nevertheless what all men, except infants and lunatics, more or less distinctly acknowledge in their individual actions, although they may misconstrue them in their uneducated opinions, or spoil them by indulgence in purely speculative systems. The divine inspiration of the common sense is therefore man's final support, amidst the so-called "contingencies" of temporal change in himself and in his surroundings." Thomas Reid, p. 135.

fact that the new natural theology reinstates the theistic arguments that Hume had challenged. It does so, however, not in the name of omni-comptetent Reason, but in the name of the basic principles of human nature. The foundations of theistic reasoning are laid in the constitution of man.

Reid views the theistic proofs with favor, but it may be shown that this in itself is not equivalent to rationalism. For Locke and the English natural theologians, reason is the key to the universe of reality, and by its disciplined exercise, the finite mind may pass from the intuition of its own existence and nature of God's: it can demonstrate the truth of theistic belief with "apodictic certainty." Locke's argument to a First Cause is translated into the pages of Reid. Beside it is to found Paley's proof from final causes, which is expressed in this way:

> The argument from final causes, when reduced to a syllogism, has two premises:--First, That design and intelligence in the cause, may, with certainty, be inferred from marks or signs of it in the effect.... The second... is, That there are in fact the clearest marks of design and wisdom in the works of nature; and the conclusion is, That the works of nature are the effects of a wise and intelligent Cause.[1]

In analyzing the two forms of theistic proof, Reid fastens upon the indemonstrable "metaphysical axioms" which carry the full weight of the theistic proof. Three are particularly relevant:

> The first is, That the qualities which we perceive by our senses must have a subject, which we call body, and that the thoughts we are conscious of must have a subject, which we call mind.... The second ... is--That whatever begins to exist, must have a cause which produced it.... The last... is, That design and intelligence in the cause may be inferred with certainty, from marks or signs of it in the effect.[2]

Reid holds that both the "cosmological" and "teleological" proofs are possible because these axioms may be accepted as genuine first principles.

1. Reid, op. cit., pp. 460-1. For cosmological proof, cf. pp. 466-7.
2. Ibid., pp. 454-7.

Admit the principles, and the arguments follow with convincing force. Deny the principles, however, and further theistic discussion is pointless. That they may be denied is clearly possible. It is evident, moreover, that one who persists in denying them cannot be coerced by logic into acknowledging God. The only philosophic recourse is to show that a denial of these axioms contradicts the whole of human nature and experience, making rational thought and action impossible. A philosophy built around such denials could only end in spiritual suicide--in the total disablement of man's rational and moral powers. But a critical view of the human mind and the common experience of mankind discovers irreducible judgments, such as these axioms, which impel thought to look beyond nature to God.[1] They are woven into the fabric of human nature as a perpetual witness to the superintending Power, Whose Mind and Will are the ultimate context of human life.

The many and critical imperfections of Reid's doctrine will become increasingly apparent in the criticisms and developments of the later Scottish natural theologians. These may be passed over for the present in order that necessary emphasis may be given to the bent which

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1. Arguing for the first metaphysical axiom, having to do mental and material "substance," Reid writes: "The distinction between sensible qualities, and the substance to which they belong, and between thought and the mind that thinks, is not the invention of philosophers; it is found in the structure of all languages, and therefore must be common to all men who speak with understanding. And I believe no man, however sceptical he may be in speculation, can talk on the common affairs of life for half an hour, without saying things that imply his belief of the reality of these distinctions." (Ibid., p. 454).--Similarly, he vindicates the causal axiom: "... it is to be admitted as a first or self-evident principle. Two reasons may be urged for this. 1. The universal consent of mankind, not of philosophers only, but of the rude and unlearned vulgar .... 2. ...mankind not only assent to it in speculation, but ... the practice of life is grounded upon it in the most important matters, even in cases where experience leaves us doubtful; and it is impossible to act with common prudence if we set it aside." (pp. 456-7). The third axiom is based on like considerations. (pp. 457-60).

Reid successfully impressed upon later theistic development in Scotland. Once again, a comparison with Kant may prove instructive. Kant, of course, regarded the "theoretic-dogmatic" proofs as invalid, and in their place substituted a moral proof of his own. In this connection he made a useful distinction. Referring to the moral proof, he wrote:

> ... This is an argument which sufficiently proves to the human reason in its moral or practical exercise the existence of God as a moral Being.... It is not an absolute proof of His existence, but a proof of it in a certain reference only. ... The moral argument might thus be called an argument κατ' ἄνθρωπον valid for all men as rational beings, and not merely for the private modes of thought of this or that particular man; and as such it is to be distinguished from the theoretic-dogmatic argument κατ' ἀλήθειαν which asserts more things to be certain than is given to man to know.[1]

Viewed in the light of Kant's distinction between proofs κατ' ἀλήθειαν and proofs κατ' ἄνθρωπον, Reid's natural theology stands upon argument that corresponds more nearly to the latter. The claim to know κατ' ἀλήθειαν, or discern with "apodictic" certainty, the "inner principle" by which God's nature is uniquely determined, is as foreign to Reid as to Kant. The rationalistic theism of Christian Wolff, refuted in the first Critique, is precisely what Reid means by a "confident" philosophy which fails to take the limitations of human reason into account and exalts the powers of man too high. His own use of the traditional proofs, accordingly, is not to be understood in a "theoretic-dogmatic" sense. The logic of the new Scottish natural theology is more nearly that of Kant's moral argument, which is a proof κατ' ἄνθρωπον. Specifically, it is a demand of the "practical reason." Moral man in a non-moral universe is for Kant an unethical and impossible conception. He would therefore infer from the inescapable imperatives of moral consciousness the reality of God, and of

1. Quoted in John Baillie, The Interpretation of Religion (New York, 1941), pp. 271-2.

a free, responsible, and immortal soul in man. In Scotland, a moral argument was to be worked out independently by Thomas Erskine of Linlathen and Thomas Chalmers. But, while Reid himself conceives no specific moral argument, he invokes a logic similar to Kant's--mutatis mutandis--in founding theistic reasoning upon the whole of man's rational consciousness, of which moral consciousness is but a part.[1] The first principles of morals have the same foundation in reason as grammatical, logical, mathematical, metaphysical, and aesthetic first principles. They are common to all men as rational creatures and not merely the "private mode of thought of this or that particular man." And upon this is based the inference, or presumption, that the ultimate springs of reality must be such as to allow for the fact of human nature. The existence of God is, in this sense, a demand of the whole rational nature of man, required by the thrust of his total rationality and not simply by the imperatives of his conscience. Alternative views contradict one or more of the basic principles upon which thought and action rest.

On this view shared by Common Sense Philosophy and the new Scottish natural theology, the theistic proofs are demonstrative only in an etymological and not in a logical sense. Nature--which in the first instance is human nature--shows, portrays, points out the Creator whose manifold wisdom is impressed upon all His works. But to read their meaning, something more than intellectual dexterity or logical acumen is necessary. "Candour" and "humility" are specifically mentioned--two virtues

1. "All our reasonings in morals, in natural jurisprudence, in the law of nations, as well as our reasonings about the duties of natural religion, and about the moral government of the Deity, must be grounded upon the dictates of our moral faculty, as first principles." Reid, op. cit., p. 599.

appropriate to the limited powers of the human mind. Men have no choice but to accept a station mid-way between a specious confidence that claims to measure all reality by infallible logic, and an equally specious despair that avows certain knowledge to be a will-o'-the-wisp. Candour and humility in the use of rational powers clarify the immediate scene of human life, and thereby expose the signs that point beyond nature to the God whose power maintains it and gives it meaning. Only where these virtues are present can natural theology come to a fruitful result. Without them, "demonstration" in the etymological sense is impossible.

The view of natural theology constructed from Reid's incidental references to the subject is nowhere given comprehensive expression in any of his writings. Nor is it developed at length until the time of Chalmers. Nevertheless, it underlies such summary statements concerning natural theology as are to be found in Scottish theological writing at the turn of the nineteenth century. Principal George Hill of St. Andrews--Chalmers' teacher in theology--introduces the subject of his Lectures in Divinity with these representative paragraphs.

> I assume, as the ground-work of every religious system, these two great doctrines, that "God is, and that He is a rewarder of them that seek him." When I say that I assume them, I do not mean that human reason unassisted by revelation was ever able to demonstrate these doctrines in a manner satisfactory to every understanding. But I mean that these doctrines are agreeable to the natural impressions of the human mind, and that any religious system which purifies them from the manifold error with which they have been incorporated, corresponds, in that respect, to the clear deductions of enlightened reason.
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> When we say that there is a God, we mean that the universe is the work of an intelligent Being; that is, from the things which we behold, we infer the existence of what is not the object of our senses. To show that the inference is legitimate, we must be able to state the principles upon which it proceeds. ... These principles are found in the constitution of the human mind, in sentiments and perceptions which are natural and ultimate, which are manifested by

> all men upon various occasions, and which are only followed to their proper conclusion when they conduct us to the knowledge of God.[1]

Here, then is the mediating position of Scottish philosophy evident in the new natural theology. It illustrates the principled moderateness of Moderate thinkers. It has nothing of the "gnostic" tendency of English rationalistic theology, and passes no judgment upon the nature and conditions of a supernatural revelation. Philosophy is conceived to be a limited human activity, which nevertheless points toward the Divine reality; revelation is freely acknowledged to be the activity of God, by which He spells out His redemptive will for men. Christian teaching about God completes the philosophic portrait of reality. In this lies the justice of Professor Seth's remark that "for their personal ontology," Scottish philosophers "simply fell back upon the language of religion, which relates God to the world as its Creator, and to man also as his Creator, and in a special sense, his Father and his God."[2] This relation between Scottish philosophy and revealed theology--between reason and faith--is, by its very nature, incapable of precise definition. In an age bent upon scientific precision, it would seem increasingly inadequate. And so, throughout the Scottish theistic development of the nineteenth century, there is a progressive modification of the adjustment of reason and faith. This will be traced to its culmination in the theology of Scottish idealists.

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1. (Philadelphia, 1842) pp. 1-2. The Lectures were edited posthumously by his son.
2. Supra, p. 73.

CHAPTER III

MORAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND NATURAL THEOLOGY: THOMAS CHALMERS

Although its roots are deeply embedded in the previous century, the development of Scottish demonstrative theism properly belongs to the nineteenth. The reasons have already been indicated: Confessional influences dominated the Scottish mind until the middle of the eighteenth century, legislating against the prevailing philosophic theism of England; when Confessionalism relinquished its control, the subsequent "mediating philosophy" confined itself on principle to the study of human nature and its essential factors in human consciousness; in consequence, matters of theistic proof were left for the most part to a small and insignificant department of the theological course in the universities. Scottish theism was first of all a "natural theology," the term being defined by contrast to Christian "revelation," and the subject viewed as a halting introduction to doctrines derived from Scripture and systematized in the Westminster Confession. It is only with the nineteenth century that a distinctively demonstrative theism assumes larger proportions, and undergoes a development that is increasingly independent of traditional theological views. Throughout the nineteenth century, there appears an extensive Scottish literature dealing primarily or exclusively with the theism of the rational "proofs." The fundamental tendencies of thought embodied in these works—the main themes pursued by Scottish religious philosophy—are now to be

indicated in the representative doctrines of Thomas Chalmers, John Tulloch, Robert Flint, and John Caird. The choice of these four theologians requires some preliminary justification.

The dominant characteristic of Scottish theistic literature is its diversity. Here there is to be found no clearly defined body of common doctrine, constantly undergoing greater and greater logical refinement, and moving toward one general issue: Scottish theism does not lend itself readily to the schematic treatment that is possible in tracing the development of German religious thought after Kant. Its history is that of numerous independent assaults upon the citadel of truth, rather than of a single, concentrated effort.[1] While the main contributions are by academic

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1. A comprehensive treatment of Scottish theistic development would take into account the following writers. They are given in the order of their earliest contribution to theistic discussion.

1816	W. L. Brown	1865	J. Hutchison Stirling
1823	Thomas Dick	1867	W. R. Pirie
1829	Alexander Crombie		W. H. Gillespie
1830	Robert Morehead	1877	Robert Flint
(cir. 1830)	John Ballantyne	1880	John Caird
1833	Thomas Chalmers	1884	George Jamieson
1835	Lord Brougham		S. S. Laurie
1846	J. D. Morell	1893	Edward Caird
1847	George Combe		W. L. Davidson
1850	James McCosh		W. A. Knight
1854	Henry Calderwood	1895	A. J. Balfour
	James Ferrier	1896	Duke of Argyll
1855	John Tulloch	1897	A. S. Pringle-Pattison
1857	James Croll		James Lindsay

This list can undoubtedly be supplemented: e.g., Dugald Stewart and Thomas Brown--distinguished members of the "Scottish School"--made incidental contributions to theistic discussion, as had Reid. Sir William Hamilton, like Kant, held that the traditional proofs are invalid and professed to accept a moral proof, which he nevertheless did not elaborate: he and a few disciples of like persuasion contributed only indirectly to the sum of Scottish theistic doctrine.

Accounts of many of the writers listed are to be found in McCosh's The Scottish Philosophy, and bibliographies in T. E. Jessop's helpful volume, A Bibliography of David Hume and of Scottish Philosophy (London, 1938). Jessop deliberately excludes the Scottish Hegelians from his list--Stirling,

theologians and philosophers, there is a remarkable representation of works by others in other walks of life: evidently, theistic speculation was widely diffused even outside of university circles. Perhaps inevitably, breadth of interest displaces depth of insight in much of the theistic writing: it is not all of equal value, to be sure. Moreover, the general Scottish mind proved to be extremely susceptible to influences coming from the most diverse quarters, in a century almost unique in respect of the fragmentation of ideas. Many currents of thought come together to form Scottish theistic doctrine, diluting in various proportions the doctrines that were native to Scotland in the previous century. The result is disagreement, contradiction, and diversity in much of Scottish theistic literature.

The selection of a few representative writers is in keeping with the historical intent of this study. The choice of four theologians facilitates the task of showing the continuity and the tendencies of Scottish theistic thinking. At the same time, it imposes certain limitations.

The main division within the ranks of Scottish theistic writers is between those whose primary concern is theology, and those whose interest is philosophy. This in itself is not a valid ground for prejudging either the philosophic or theological merit of any man's doctrine. As it happens, though primarily theologians, both Chalmers and Flint occupied the chair of moral philosophy at St. Andrews. Tulloch and Caird

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the Cairds, Laurie, and Pringle-Pattison; he omits Pirie, Gillespie, and Lindsay.

In this connection, two notable trusts for the study and propagation of natural theology were established by Scotsmen--the one by John Burnett, Esq. to reward periodic essays on the subject, the other by Lord Gifford to maintain perhaps the most distinguished of all lectureships.

each held a university principalship, and their interests ranged far beyond the limited sphere of academic theology. Catholicity of mind characterizes all four. This, and similarity of background, make them appropriate representatives of the larger theistic development of which they were a part. All held chairs of theology in the divinity halls of the Church of Scotland, and were ministers of the Church. They stand, therefore, in the succession of religious thinkers that has already been traced back to the time when Confessionalism completely dominated the Scottish mind. The fact of their being consciously related to the Scottish Church and its creed may be used as a selective factor, and a check upon the mere random choice of representative theists. The nature of the development from the time of Chalmers to that of Caird, as well as something of its extent, may in consequence be guaged with greater accuracy.[1]

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1. In passing, it may be well to avoid the possibility of misconstruction by entering a specific disclaimer against all preconceived notions of intellectual development. To say that demonstrative theism was a developing doctrine in Scottish thought implies only that there is a significant historical affinity between men of such diverse views as Chalmers, Tulloch, Flint and Caird--all of whom were Scotsmen by birth, and affected by their national environment in varying degrees. Ideas of development derived from Hegelian, evolutionist, and progressivist philosophies have influenced the study of religious thought in Scotland as elsewhere. Edward Caird's Gifford Lectures, The Evolution of Religion, maintain the thesis that there is an inherent principle of explication in religious philosophy, working semi-automatically toward an idealistic conception of God and religion. The progressivist form of this thesis is offered in a survey of nineteenth century theism by James Lindsay: "The progressiveness of Theism! That is the thesis which, in its modern aspects, we seek to present and enforce against the common but loose assumption ... that theistic philosophy has no more inspiring function than ever renewed presentation of arguments whose cogency and content remain forever unchanged." (Recent Advances in Theistic Philosophy of Religion; Edinburgh, 1897; p. 1.) While the interpretative simplicity of "developmental" views is undoubtedly attractive, they are evident oversimplifications. The term "development" has been retained, however, and is used to designate a succession of common emphases, as the term "variety," "movement," "change," and the like do not.

Such a selection, nevertheless, has distinct limitations to be borne in mind. It may be thought to impose a false continuity and a conservative bias upon the diversity of Scottish theistic writers. And to some extent this is so. To cite one example, John Caird's association with the Scottish Church and its intellectual inheritance evidently holds his Hegelianism in check; in consequence, he diverges much less from his contemporary Robert Flint—the direct heir of the Common Sense tradition—than his brother Edward and the more consistent Scottish Hegelians. But while such limitations are apparent, they do not vitiate the fact that Chalmers, Tulloch, Flint, and Caird do represent the outstanding tendencies and large characteristics of a theistic development centered upon the concept of human nature. The view that the conclusions of theologians and philosophers must be at odds stems from a frame of mind that has never gained ascendency in Scotland. It is indicative of the prevailing Scottish view that since the inception of the "Scottish philosophy" there has been a remarkable cross-fertilization of thought between the faculties of philosophy and theology in Scottish universities. And on this circumstance, the right of four theologians to represent the wider theistic development may be allowed to rest.

The development of Scottish theism is evidence of the fact that religious thought does not exist in a vacuum. The task of religious philosophy changes with the changing scene, all the more so in an age of spiritual and intellectual ferment such as the nineteenth century was. The truth about God and man must be expressed to minds conditioned by a particular historical environment. The proofs brought forward to buttress the theistic conviction must deal strategically and honestly with the hesitations, the doubts, the counter-arguments posed at each particular

point in the course of changing history. It is evident, therefore, that the task of the theistic writers to be considered will be two-sided: on the one side it is polemical, and on the other constructive.

The polemical task was imposed upon Scottish theists in the first instance by the "scepticism" of Hume, and later by the agnosticism of the Positivists, the naturalism of many Darwinians, and the pantheistic tendency of the Absolute Idealists. These anti-theistic doctrines to some extent determined the course of theistic development. They required scrutiny and honest criticism, and compelled important modifications in the formulation of theistic proofs. They imposed the need for a more precise and unambiguous terminology, carefully if somewhat cumbrously defined. And they forced a rigorous inspection of theistic reasoning according to the canons of formal logic. The result—in keeping with the general tendency of the century—was a growing specialization of thought, an increased concern with the ultimate principles involved in theistic reasoning, and the emergence of full-fledged, autonomous theistic systems of philosophy. The movement of thought from Chalmers at the beginning of the century to Caird at the end is from a narrowly circumscribed science of "natural theology" to an all-synthesizing "philosophy of religion." This is a major tendency to be traced through the teachings of the four representative theists.

The constructive task—if it may be so designated for the sake of brevity—was imposed upon Scottish theists by the Truth itself, which is to say by God Himself. Upon two fundamental propositions, all agreed: God is, and He may somehow be known to be God by all rational creatures. They agreed that this knowledge can be no esoteric or merely subjective conviction of a few: it concerns the parent Fact of all facthood, the

Supreme Reality that governs every relative reality such as man knows his own to be. This certain knowledge must be communicated to all thinking men, and in a form that evokes a like certainty. And this, of course, is only another way of saying that it must in some sense be demonstrated. But, as the survey of the antecedents of Scottish thought has shown, "demonstration" may be construed in at least two general ways. Where it is granted that God's existence and nature are a proper subject for rational demonstration, the validity and scope of theistic proofs must still be determined. What methods of thought are appropriate to the task? And to what extent can the being and perfections of God be set forth by rational argument? What is the relation of demonstrative theism to the totality of religion and worship, and in what relation do the truths of theistic demonstration and the truths of the Christian revelation stand? The development in Scotland moves toward greater and greater confidence in the powers and the scope of human reason. While Chalmers' natural theology claims to be nothing more than anticipation of the Christian revelation, Caird's philosophy of religion is a reasoned system unifying the whole of religious experience, and a mold by which Christian theology itself is to be shaped. And yet, the theism of the Scottish idealists stops short of an absolute philosophy that would absorb moral and personal reality into one grand cosmic consistency. To the end of the century, Scottish theism is grounded upon the irreducible reality of man's moral and personal nature, the inference being that such a nature necessarily points to the ultimate and sovereign person of God. The development of this thesis is a second major tendency to be traced through the doctrines of the four representative theists, beginning with Thomas Chalmers.—Chalmers by education and temperament belongs to the eighteenth century "age of order." His natural theology

nevertheless reflects the concerns and needs of the new century; as well as profound elements of his Scottish religious inheritance which were submerged in the somewhat academic presentations of Reid and his immediate successors.

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Of imperishable memory as preacher and reluctant leader of the Great Disruption in the Scottish Church, Thomas Chalmers[1] added to his more notable and permanent achievements the weight of matured conclusions as to the possibility and character of a natural theology. Though not a particularly original thinker, he faithfully reproduces in his voluminous writings the leading theological and philosophical ideas of Scotland in the early nineteenth century. He added to these only a most intense moral earnestness which mastered his mind, while stating a moral doctrine that is neither complete nor capable of being made entirely self-consistent. On the whole, a study of Chalmers' Natural Theology is rewarding, not because of any particularly original insights it has to offer, but because it shows so completely the workings of a devout mind as finely formed as Halyburton's, but attuned to a different intellectual and spiritual environment a full century later. While Windelband is undoubtedly correct in describing Chalmers as an "unimportant supporter" of the Scottish School of philosophy,[2] his natural theology brings into clear perspective the strong moral, or ethical, accent running through Scottish religious thought.

Chalmers' preoccupation with the moral foundations of natural theology is hardly an innovation. Indeed, it might be said to be more

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1. Chalmers was born in the year 1780, and died in 1847.
2. Op. cit., p. 629.

consonent with the tone and temper of Scottish Confessionalism than anything to be found in Reid's philosophy. The dominant ethical, and practical, bias of Halyburton's discussion of natural religion is more nearly approximated by Chalmers. While it is true that the second period of Reid's philosophical development was given almost exclusively to the problems of ethics, and with some fervor, his moral doctrine has a rather flat and academic quality in keeping with dispassionate analysis. The exceptional vigor of Reid's conscience, like Kant's, is tamed and disciplined by the trappings of formal discussion, appropriate to the philosophical opponents of Hume's closely reasoned conclusions. Reid's chief academic disciples also perpetuated this subjection of strong ethical force to the exigencies of philosophical method. Chalmers, however, with the manner and accent of prophetic utterance, allows moral consciousness to have full rein. The result is a "theology of conscience" which largely overshadows the contrasting "theology of academic demonstration." Chalmers attributes considerable importance to certain scientific, or a posteriori, reasonings in the interest of theistic belief; but the coercive character of natural theology he traces, not to "apodictic" certainties of reason, but to the "felt supremacy of conscience" and its imperative demands.

It is chiefly through a theology of conscience that Chalmers would counter the arguments and influence of Hume's negative outlook upon natural religion and theology. The far-flung effects of Hume's doctrine--and they were generally detrimental to religion in all its aspects--are a matter of familiar record. The exact proportions of his influence upon the religious thinking of his countrymen are rather difficult to assess, although in a few striking instances--notably those of James Mill and Thomas Carlyle--it worked profoundly against the tradition handed down from the

fathers. Some significance should probably be attached to the fact that of these two, Carlyle only won his way back to a distinctly spiritual view of life; and this he did largely through allegiance to conscience and an indominable sense of duty. It has been said of Carlyle that he was a "preacher" and a "missionary of conscience" laboring outside the churches. Chalmers, by similarity and contrast, might appropriately be called a "Carlyle within the Church"—evidencing much of the same all-mastering devotion to conscience, and finding there a ground on which to meet all men in order to point them beyond conscience to its Sovereign, beyond moral law to the Law-Giver, and beyond the benefactions of nature to the Divine Benefactor. While the course of the two lives could hardly have been more different, their common ancestory of mind and conscience is quite apparent. But, going much beyond Carlyle is one important respect, Chalmers would make natural theology a preface to the book of Christian revelation, in which the full extent of God's righteousness and grace are made perfectly plain. Of this, he seems never to have had any lasting doubt.

Chalmers' concern with natural theology is hardly intelligible apart from Hume's philosophy of human nature; much less, its particular doctrines. His earlier published views specifically repudiated any interest in any rational or moral considerations apart from those contained in revelation itself: in this respect, he out-Halyburtoned Halyburton, who at least tried to show their insufficiency. But the evidence of a deeper acquaintance with Hume is followed by a decided change of view. As background to all that Chalmers has to say concerning a posteriori theistic proofs stands Hume's "singular effect" argument—a particular consequence following from his account of causality. But even more important is the

general tenor of Hume's argument, a consequence of his subordination of reason to passion, culminating in the well-known conclusion to the Dialogues:

> If the whole of natural theology, as some people seem to maintain, resolves itself into one simple, though somewhat ambiguous, at least undefined proposition, that the cause or causes of order in the universe probably bear some remote analogy to human intelligence: If this proposition be not capable of extension, variation, or more particular explication: If it afford no inference that affects human life, or can be the source of any action or forbearance: And if the analogy, imperfect as it is, can be carried no farther than to the human intelligence; and cannot be transferred, with any appearance of probability, to the other qualities of the mind: If this really be the case, what can the most inquisitive, contemplative, and religious man do more than give a plain, philosophical assent to the proposition as often as it occurs; and believe that the arguments, on which it is established, exceed the objections which lie against it.[1]

It is a somewhat strange, but irresolvable, fact that nearly sixty years elapsed before a Scotsman countered this view forthrightly in the name of conscience. In relation to the religious tradition of Scotland, the most destructive effect of Hume's philosophy had not been his dismemberment of the theoretical "proofs" which never had a vital place in Scottish religious thought, but rather what amounted to the secularization, or "naturalization", of the Confessional view of man. The result of Hume's philosophy is a human nature devoid of any fundamental human experience that can either confirm or deny the reality of God and the divine destiny of the human spirit. Over against this must now be placed the fundamental affirmations of Chalmers' natural theology:

> The theology of nature is the theology of conscience; and conscience tells every possessor of it, if not the certainty, at least the probability of a God. And this probability is enough to set men agoing; for, as Butler says with deep and eminently practical sagacity, probability is the guide of life. And so the sense of moral deficiency, the unfailing sense of

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1. Dialogues, p. 227. I have altered the underlining of the text.

> every earnest spirit, will, without any nice argumentative computation, suggest the instant feeling of at least a probable guilt, a probable God, and a probable vengeance at His hands,—enough to set the whole machinery of human interest, and fears, and disquietudes, into busy operation. It is in the midst of such agitations and doings that Christianity offers itself to the notice of the inquirer.[1]

Chalmers' doctrine of the supremacy of conscience is to be set over against Hume's doctrine of the supremacy of passion. This is the crux of his effort to reclaim human nature—ordinary human nature—for a theistic view of life, and also for the fuller Christian view.

To set Chalmers' teaching in the clearest light, (A) his "theology of conscience" must first be described and set in its proper historical setting. Then (B) it will be possible to show the limited but important place he accords to "a posteriori proofs" in relation to the whole of natural theology: Chalmers' devotion to science was second only to his Christian commitment, and the inductive method of science was for him and the Scottish School generally the only sound method of philosophy. Finally, (C) it will be possible to assess Chalmers' contribution to Scottish theistic development. He makes full use of Reid's generous concession, that first principles may well be the occasion of differences between men "who really love truth and are open to conviction." In so doing, he illustrates a fundamental tension within Scottish theistic doctrine, reflecting the temper of the early nineteenth century, and indicating the direction in which later theistic development was to move.

(A) Chalmers' two volume work on Natural Theology is the culmination of a personal evolution that began by denying any significance

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1. From "An Historical and Critical View of the Speculative Philosophy of Europe in the Nineteenth Century by J. D. Morell, A.M.," first published in the North British Review for February, 1847. Cf. Chalmers' Miscellanies (New York, 1848), p. 491.

the reasonings which form the substance of his mature thought on the subject. His earliest view--adopted evidently in conscious reaction to the views of Principal Hill, his teacher in theology at St. Andrews--professed to find adequate grounds for the acceptance of Christian revelation in objective historical evidence as to the veracity of Scripture, without any further considerations whatsoever. His latest view sees conscience as the natural monitor of the human spirit, and a "point of contact"--to use a more recent term--to which the divine revelation of Christian Scripture is directed. With characteristic frankness, Chalmers has described the radical change in his thinking:

> Miracles, simply as such, and without regard to adjuncts at all, were enough in all conceivable circumstances, to authenticate any professed communication from God to the world. The historical evidence of these miraculous facts were enough of themselves to constitute a simple but solid foundation on which to rest the whole superstructure of our creed. We confess our partiality in other days, to what we held as a beautiful and consistent exemplification of the question between us and infidels. There is nothing, however which has contributed more to modify our views upon this subject than the very question whereof we now treat. Instead of holding all religion as suspended on the miraculous evidence, we see this evidence itself standing at the bar of an anterior principle, and there waiting for its authentication. There is a previous natural religion on whose aid we call for the determination of this matter. It is an authority that we at one time should have utterly disregarded and contemned; but now we hold it in higher reverence, since, reflecting on the supremacy of conscience within us, we deem this to be the token of an ascendent principle of morality and truth in the universe about us.[1]

The direction in which Chalmers' thought moved was thus from a somewhat naive view of the objective, self-evidencing truth of Christian revelation[2]

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1. Evidences of the Christian Revelation, in Selected Works, Vol. VI, pp. 235-6. Chalmers' numerous writings have been collected in three incomplete and mutually suplementary sets: The first, begun by Chalmers himself, was the Works in 25 vols., published between 1836 and 1842; the second, edited by his son-in-law Dr. Hanna, was the Posthumous Works, published between 1847-9; the last was the Selected Works, also edited by Dr. Hanna, and published around 1857. These collections respectively will be referred to hereafter as W, PW, and SW, with the appropriate volume indicated.

2. E.g., Chalmers wrote in his article on "Christianity" in the Edinburgh

to a greater awareness of the inward and spiritual reality of human nature to which Christian revelation is addressed. The stages of this thought-development may be traced through a succession of Chalmers' publications, and collated with relevant biographical material collected by William Hanna in the four volume Memoirs.[1] His earliest view was expressed in several articles and volumes dealing with "Christian evidences." But these conclusions were severely criticized by older contemporaries who revived Reid's charge against the Confessionalists, that to contemn natural theology is to play into the hands of the sceptic. Some of the criticisms seem to have hit their mark, for Chalmers ceased to publish anything concerning "Christian evidences" for ten years—during which time his thoughts were altered considerably. Meanwhile, an appointment to the Chair of Moral Philosophy in the University of St. Andrews came to him in 1823, and there he remained for five years. His only qualifications for the teaching post were those which had been made evident during his earlier career as a preacher. It was during this period that characteristic views on questions of moral doctrine were formed, providing the foundation for his later volumes on natural theology. One of his first undertakings after transferring to the Chair of Theology in the University of Edinburgh in 1828 was to accept an invitation to prepare the first of the Bridgewater Treatises on the subject, The Power, Wisdom, and Goodness of God As Manifested in the

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Encyclopedia (edited by David Brewster) Vol. VI, p. 384: "Upon the authority of the proofs already insisted on (i.e., proofs of miraculous authentication, as in Locke), the New Testament must be received as a revelation from heaven; and ... instead of sitting in judgment over it, nothing remains on our part, but an unreserved submission to all the doctrine and information which it offers to us."

1. The full title is Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Thomas Chalmers, D. D. Passages relating to the development of Chalmers' thought on the subject of natural theology are the following: I, pp. 143-6, 205, 367-8, 372-3, 375-9; III, pp. 309, 436-7; IV, pp. 420ff, 428.

Adaptation of External Nature to the Moral and Intellectual Constitution of Man. It was thus, at the invitation of an English bishop, that his thoughts concerning natural theology were finally crystallized. And the somewhat prolix treatise, published in 1833, became the core of the thorough revision incorporated three years later in the first two volumes of the collected Works with the title, Natural Theology. Subsequent treatments such as the introductory chapters of the Institutes of Theology[1] add little of importance, although a lengthy review of J. D. Morell's Speculative Philosophy of Europe is of particular interest. In the last year of his life, Chalmers was introduced through Morell's pages to Kant and post-Kantian philosophy. In Kant he discovered one whose moral theology seemed to accord well with his own established views, despite what he deplored as the wrong-headed agnosticism of the first Critique. Although Chalmers' knowledge of Kant was neither thorough nor entirely accurate, he was justified in claiming the great German as an ally of his own characteristic doctrines. Both were concerned to refute Hume. The transformation of his earlier estimate of natural theology and his formulation of the moral proof for the existence of God were completed, however, before he came into prolonged contact with Kant in Morell's history.

In taking issue with an argument such as Hume's, Chalmers makes plain from the outset that the primary frame of reference within which discussion must take place is one of moral principles. That is, moral considerations clearly have precedence over the theoretical. The note of responsibility for theoretical, or speculative conclusions is paramount.

> Man is not to blame, if an atheist, because of the want of proof. But he is to blame, if an atheist, because he has shut his eyes. He is not to blame, that the evidence for a God has not been seen

1. PW, Vol. VII, Books I and II.

> by him, if no such evidence there were within the field of his observation. But he is to blame, if the evidence have not been seen, because he turned away his attention from it.... There is a moral perversity of spirit with him who is willing, in the midst of many objects of gratification, that there should not be one object of gratitude.[1]

As will be seen presently, Chalmers makes significant concessions to Hume as to theoretical principles, leaving little room for confidence in the demonstrative powers of reason, or in its ability to establish more than the most tenuous probability that God exists. Yet even so weak a conclusion as this is deemed adequate to the essential character of natural theology.

> Though in the dark as to the question whether a God exists, yet on the bare imagination of a God, we are not at all in the dark as to the question of the gratitude and obedience which are due Him. There is moral light in the midst of intellectual darkness.... The very idea of God, even in its most hypothetical form, will bring along with it an instant sense and recognition of the moralities and duties that would be owing to Him.[2]

With his position thus boldly stated, Chalmers leaves little doubt as to the character of theistic "proof." Its force springs primarily from moral imperatives rather than from logically coercive demonstrations. The seat of natural religion is the rational conscience instead of the rational intellect. Unless the moral faculty is called into play, theistic reasoning is without any vital significance. When it is, the search for God ceases to be an abstract theoretical quest, and becomes an obligation—an imperative for conscience. That it is thus imperative, that natural theology is essentially a theology of conscience, is Chalmers' central doctrine.

> It is in virtue of this ever busy and ever whispering conscience within (man), if there be not the certainty, not even the probability, there will at least be the imagination of a God. It is this faculty, in truth, with its ever recurring instigations,

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1. Natural Theology, W, Volume I, pp. 72-3.
2. Ibid., p. 64.

> which gives to humanity its strongest sense of a God. Apart from revelation, it is the theology of conscience, and not the theology of academic demonstration, which originated and upholds religion in the world. It is because of this part or peculiarity of our mental constitution that we have a popular theology everywhere.[1]

Later generations of Scottish theologians were to give greater emphasis and consistency to this position clearly enunciated by Chalmers. While the influence of Kant's moral theology at the end of the nineteenth and in the early part of the present century was undoubtedly decisive, a Scottish predilection toward such doctrine is already evident in Chalmers. His chief resources were almost entirely native, being the Confessionalist piety and fervent moralism of his forebears, as well as the doctrines of the great English moralists—chiefly Bishop Butler.[2] —The ramifications of Chalmers' "theology of conscience" may be brought into view by considering in turn (i) the distinction between the "ethics of theology" and the "objects of theology" which introduces his every treatment of natural theology; (ii) the doctrine of the supremacy of conscience; and finally (iii) the moral proof of the existence of God.

(i) On the basis of the distinction between the "ethics of theology" and the "objects of theology," Chalmers would show that, however right Hume may have been in ~~b~~laboring the difficulties and ambiguities of theistic demonstration, universally necessary ethical principles remain to compel earnest inquiry as to the reality and character of God. The chief "objects of theology" are God, who is infinite Spirit, and the spiritual soul in man—whose essential nature cannot be studied or substantiated by the limited means of empirical science and inductive philosophy.

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1. Institutes of Theology, PW, Vol. VII, p. 73.

2. Chalmers' innocence of German theology, for example, is apparent in a letter addressed to a friend travelling in Germany: Cf. Memoirs, III, p. 438. The review of Morell's Speculative Philosophy of Europe indicates his previous ignorance of German speculative doctrines.

Sense knowledge is relative to man's finite place in space and time, and in the nature of the case cannot deal with the transcendent attributes of spirit. Chalmers gives a large measure of assent to Hume's inductive principles, and presently will be shown to agree that however far inductive reasoning may rise toward an absolute theistic conviction, the objects of theology must remain under a cloud of final obscurity and uncertainty.[1] As over against this, however, the science of ethics has to do with primary axioms which, like the axioms of mathematics, must be deemed valid for all possible minds, human and Divine, under all possible circumstances. The ethics of theology are, accordingly, what might be described in Kantian terminology as a number of ethical maxims a priori, of which the principle of the "virtuousness of gratitude" is given as an example.

> The moral propriety of gratitude is that which attaches to the relation between a benefactor and a dependant; and it equally remains so whether the relation be seldom or often exemplified. Nay, gratitude would be the appropriate virtue of this relation, although actually it were never exemplified at all.... The virtuousness of gratitude would remain a stable category in ethical science; although, never once exemplified in the living world of realities, we derived our only notion of it from the possibilities which were contemplated in an ideal world of relations.[2]

Chalmers evidently assumes that there are a number of such ethical principles which, on formulation, are self-evidently and universally valid; but like Reid, Price, and Clarke—the intuitive moralists whom he read, and on whom he appears to depend for this element of his moral doctrine, he makes no systematic attempt to show what those principles are. The side of this doctrine that claims his attention entirely is the belief that the universe is moral "from the top throughout," and that the moral relations that obtain

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1. Cf. Natural Theology, I, pp. 17-20.
2. Ibid., pp. 21-2.

within the finite sphere of human consciousness must apply in the infinite reaches of reality. If God possibly exists, moral obligations to Him are certain and inviolable.

> There is naught to baffle our ethics in the infinity of God, or in the distance at which He stands from us. Only grant Him to be our benefactor and our owner; and on this relation alone do we confidently found our obligations, both of gratitude, and of service. Just as there is nothing in the mighty distance or overbearing magnitude of the sun that baffles our mathematics.[1]

Chalmers gives a prominent place to this distinction between the "ethics" and the "objects of theology" in order that it might serve as a key-note to the whole of his discussion of natural theology, although in fact it cannot be made entirely consistent with the remaining elements of his moral doctrine. He makes a specific distinction between the "abstract question in morals" which belongs to the science of ethics, and the directions, or dictates, of conscience which regulate the natural--or instinctive--propensities and affections of man's whole being.[2] The rational maxims of ethics also have no place in Chalmers' formulation of the moral proof. On the whole, it appears that the account of the "ethics" of theology--associated constantly by analogy with the mathematics of natural science--is taken over from the eighteenth century age of order and from "Newtonian moralists" without reconciling it with the introspective and inductive method of ethical study presupposed in the doctrine of the supremacy of conscience. It is quite evident that Chalmers' moral universe is conceived after the fashion of Newton's physical universe--that the infinite variety of personal life is reduced to fixed spiritual forms, subject to inflexible and predictable moral laws.[3] This, on the one hand, illustrates

1. Ibid., p. 42
2. Ibid., pp. 305-6
3. Cf. ibid., pp. 23-47. The conversion of physical order and stability into moral equivalents is illustrated fully in Chalmers' popular Astronomical Discourses (W, Vol., VII).

his indebtedness to a characteristic thought-pattern of the eighteenth century. The doctrine of the "felt-supremacy of conscience," on the other, looks in a different direction--away from abstract and supra-personal laws to the immediacies of moral consciousness, upon which the case for theism mainly rests. Yet, however independent of Chalmers' most characteristic ethical doctrines, the distinction between the "ethics" and "objects of theology" bears important testimony to the relative weight of ethical and theoretical considerations in his thinking.

(ii) The conviction that man is primarily a creature of conscience stands at the center of Chalmers' moral theology. And by making moral consciousness primary and supreme, he revises Reid's account of human nature, which had maintained a judicious balance between "intellectual powers" and "active powers." Conscience, according to Chalmers is the dominant "faculty" of man's nature, and the self-evident datum that defines its character. "The supremacy of Conscience is a fact in the constitution of human nature--seen in the light of consciousness by each man, of his own individual specimen; and verified in the light of observation, as extending to every other specimen within the compass of his knowledge."[1] This moral emphasis is an omnipresent fact in the Natural Theology. It is significant that in dealing with the structure of the mind after the fashion of Scottish Philosophy, Chalmers quickly passes over its intellectual functions in a few brief paragraphs, and devotes three chapters to the moral structure of human consciousness, as well as six chapters to moral relations within human society and its fundamental institutions.[2] This decided disproportion is evidently

1. Natural Theology, I, p. 351.

2. E.g., there are chapters "On those special Affections which conduce to the civil and political Well-being of Society" and "On those special Affections which conduce to the economic Well-being of Society." Chalmers' life-long interest in political and economic theory was closely associated with

intended to correct a deficiency in theistic thinking, not to the entire exclusion of other considerations. But the fundamental change represented by this "correction" cannot be overlooked.

Chalmers teaches consistently that conscience, its inherent authority, and its specific dictates are facts of immediate experience, which must be experienced immediately in order to be known as facts. This characteristic of being bound to direct consciousness lies behind the terminology employed to justify the prerogatives of the moral faculty: it stands upon an irresistable "feeling," a natural "sense" or "sentiment." The supremacy of conscience is a "felt supremacy."

> The place which it occupies, or rather which it is felt that it should occupy, and which naturally belongs to it, is that of a governor, claiming the superiority, and taking to itself the direction over all the other powers and passions of humanity. If this superiority be denied to it, there is a felt violence done to the whole economy of man. The sentiment is, that the thing is not as it should be: and even after conscience is forced, in virtue of some subsequent derangement, from this station of rightful ascendancy, we can still distinguish between what is the primitive design or tendency, and what is the posterior aberration.[1]

Another relevant passage differentiates conscience from other components of the human spirit, equally natural.

> One, it is generally felt, may be too ambitious, or too much set on wealth and fame, or too resentful of injury, or even too facile in his benevolence, when carried to the length of being injudicious and hurtful; but no one is ever felt, if he have sound and enlightened views of morality, to be too conscientious. When we affirm this of conscience, we but concur in the homage rendered to it by all men, as being the rightful, if not the actual superior, among all the feelings and faculties of our nature.[2]

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his intense ethical fervor. A disciple of political conservatives like Hume and of Adam Smith in economic theory, Chalmers is always at pains to justify his own outspoken conservatism by reference to ethical principles. At the same time, he protests in the name of conscience against particular abuses of political and economic power.

1. Ibid., p. 317

2. Ibid., p. 318. Chalmers follows closely the teaching of Bishop Butler in matters of psychological detail. E.G., "Every affection in our nature

In all such statements, Chalmers is careful to distinguish between the right to authority which conscience is felt to possess, and the actual power of conscience to enforce its authority over the "inward desires and outward doings" of a particular man. In general, the distinctive moral sense may be described as an awareness that man is, according to his own inherent nature, subject to the ordering of conscience. And the order which conscience imposes--de jure if not de facto--comprises "all those virtues which the hand of the Deity hath inscribed on the tablet of the human heart, or on the tablet of natural jurisprudence."[1]

As moral doctrine, this view of the supremacy of conscience is not extraordinary--although it does represent fairly the general reaction at the beginning of the nineteenth century against the externalism of eighteenth century ethics generally or of a theological ethic such as Paley's. There was in Chalmers' moral doctrine, as in that of many contemporaries, a growing awareness of the essential inwardness of moral imperatives, which Kant characterized for German thought in his doctrine of the autonomy of the moral will. On Chalmers' view, however, the distinctive character of man's moral being is not necessarily the disposition of his will to perform that which it recognizes as a self-imposed law, but rather the presence of an active conscience, declaring that the nature of man embraces not only what he persistently is and does, but also the impinging and imperative sense of what he ought to be and is not. For Chalmers, moral consciousness is a facet of nature, "the token of an ascendent principle of morality and truth in the universe about us."

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is appeased by the object that is suited to it. The object of conscience is the subordination of the whole to its dictates." Also, the distinction Chalmers emphasized between the de jure and de facto supremacy of conscience is attributed to Butler.

1. Ibid., p. 339. These are the virtues thought to be common to all historical religions and mores: temperance, chastity, kindness, integrity, and truth, etc.

(iii) To Chalmers and his countryman Thomas Erskine probably belongs the distinction of being the first to introduce a "moral proof" into the theistic thinking of Britain, without the benefit of German speculation along similar lines. S. T. Coleridge, it is true, was simultaneously publishing his own very sketchy notions of Kant's teaching, but did not himself subscribe entirely to any part of it. Chalmers, through Erskine, who acknowledged indebtedness to Coleridge, may have received some remote influence from the sage of Konigsberg; but the form, or forms, in which he presents the "moral proof" show a direct debt to Bishop Butler. The transformation he makes in Butler's teaching is a further indication of important differences in natural theology and theistic thinking after it had crossed over from England to Scotland. Chalmers' moral proof is, in fact, a series of three or four distinguishable proofs, based upon the leading elements of Butler's moral psychology. Of these proofs, the most important is that arising from the doctrine of the supremacy of conscience.

The foundation of the moral proof is the <u>fact</u> of conscience and its strong imperatives in the direction of virtue, rather than any consideration of the abstract and a priori principles of virtue that comprise the "ethics of theology." Chalmers keeps these two elements of his moral doctrine separate, and for interesting reasons.

> The objective nature of virtue is one thing. The subjective nature of the human mind, by which virtue is felt and recognised, is another. It is not from the former, any more than from the eternal truths of geometry, that we can demonstrate the existence or attributes of God--but from the latter, as belonging to the facts of a creation emanating from His will, and therefore bearing upon it the stamp of His character.... Virtue is not a creation of the Divine will, but has had everlasting residence in the nature of the Godhead. The mind of man is a creation; and therefore indicates, by its characteristics, the character of Him, to the fiat and the forthgoing of whose will it owes existence.[1]

1. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 306.

The question-begging tendency of such considerations may be overlooked in order to notice the rather unique development this view represents. Chalmers seems to hold that because the rational principles of ethics are universal and necessary—and therefore equally necessary for a conceivable God as for any man, they are inappropriate to an argument bent upon showing the actual existence and moral character of a living God. From the outset, therefore, his reasoning concerns itself only with existing facts. And conscience, as has already been indicated, Chalmers takes to be an immediate fact of nature. The moral proof, as a result, depends on what later generations have learned to call a kind of "existential thinking." Conscience bears direct testimony to the "moral greatness of Virtue,"

> ... as erect in the consciousness of its strength as if it had the public mind of the Universe upon its side. It is difficult to resist the feeling, that amid all the mystery of present appearances, the highest power is at one with the highest principle.[1]

This expresses most directly the logic of the doctrine that is given more formal expression elsewhere in Chalmers' voluminous writings.

The clearest and most detailed formulation he gives to the moral proof from conscience is to be found in the following passage, which also analyzes the logic on which Chalmers would have the argument rest.

> The sense of a governing principle within begets in all men the sentiment of a living Governor without and above them, and it does so with all the speed of an instantanious feeling; yet it is not an impression, it is an inference notwithstanding—and as much so as any inference from that which is seen, to that which is unseen. There is, in the first instance, cognizance taken of a fact ... by the eye of consciousness which has been termed the faculty of internal observation. And the consequent belief of a God, instead of being an instinctive sense of the Divinity, is the fruit of an inference grounded on that fact. There is instant transition made, from the sense of a Monitor within to the faith of a living Sovereign above; and this argument ... may be regarded, notwithstanding the force and fertility of other considerations, as the great prop of natural theology among men.[2]

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1. Ibid., p. 336.
2. Ibid., pp. 331-2

In one respect, this formulation is unfortunate, for it does not differentiate clearly between the ordinary "cosmological" proof—proceeding from an effect to an appropriate cause—and a distinctively moral proof. In fact, endeavoring to bring theistic reasoning into conformity with the inductive procedures of science, Chalmers frequently treats the moral argument as a species of proof based upon the causal principle as formulated by Reid. But, with insight more appropriate to the moral tenor of the Natural Theology as a whole, he characterizes it as having its appropriate rationale from within the moral consciousness. Conscience governs as though it already had "the public mind of the Universe upon its side." It points to the "highest power" as supporting its authoritative demands.[1] But, however formulated, Chalmers insists on the inferential character of the moral proof. He rejects what he terms the "mysticism" of holding that there is an immediate intuition of the Divine Being—insisting to the contrary that man is inherently and essentially a creature of conscience, by nature impelled to look beyond himself for the grounds of his moral being.

In Chalmers' presentation of this view, there is good evidence to show that his thinking is a direct inversion of the elements of Bishop Butlers' doctrine of conscience. In his ethical doctrine, Butler everywhere presupposes the existence of God as rational Mind: He is the Guarantor of the teleological order in which conscience has its superior place in relation to the moral ends of human life, and therefore its superior authority. Butler had felt the full force of the rationalistic movement in the eighteenth century. For ethical purposes, he assumed the coercive certainty of

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1. Add to this passage just referred to the following generalization upon historical evidence: "Righteousness, it was felt, would not have been so enthroned in the moral system of man, had it not been previously enthroned in the system of the universe; nor would it have held such place and pre-eminence in the judgment of all spirits, had not the Father of Spirits been its friend and ultimate avenger." (Ibid., p. 335.)

theoretical demonstrations.[1] Chalmers, for his part, attributes the moral proof to Butler, but in this he seems to have been over-generous. The reasoning is more appropriate to Scotland. Beginning with the nature of man disclosed in the empirical consciousness, and assigning the dignity of conscience to a "felt supremacy," Chalmers is able to argue--as Butler did not--from moral facts to a moral God.[2] This is in line with the central tradition of Scottish theology and philosophy.

Chalmers thus arrived at a moral proof before the influence of Kant and Germany had been felt profoundly anywhere in Britain. For this reason, therefore, some may forgive him the comparison he draws between Scottish and German theism in his review of Morell's Speculative Philosophy of Europe:

> The first and greatest argument ... of our Natural Theology, is identical with that of Kant's--the felt supremacy of conscience, which we have long deemed the most influential of all others for upholding the faith of a God throughout the world.... This argument, too, we bring to bear, even as Kant did, on the soul's immortality.... Such, in its main features, is the Natural Theology of Kant, and such, we add, is the Natural Theology of Scotland, in which, after all, Kant felt himself obliged to take refuge, when, as if by compensation of errors, he conjured up what he calls the Practical Reason, to repair the mischief, or rather the else irretrievable ruin which his Pure Reason had inflicted on the cause of Theism.[3]

It is plain here and in other remarks that Chalmers understood Kant's moral teaching and proof very imperfectly. He seems to have known little of the concept of "pure practical reason," or of its a priori deliverance as to the Summum Bonum for man. He denies that any proof can be based on the univeral, necessary, and abstract principles of ethics--although,

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1. Cp. supra, p. 18, n. 2.

2. In lectures on the Analogy of Religion (SW, vol. V, chap. III), Chalmers suggests that Butler has not made full use of moral considerations in failing to argue for a positive belief in the existence of God and the immortality of the human soul. (Cf. p. 518.) Consistent with his own premises, Butler had limited the argument to "neutralizing" anti-theistic objections.

3. Op. cit., pp. 483-4.

quite significantly, he recognizes such principles. And while the second form in which he would cast the moral proof proceeds upon the premise that pleasure and happiness are ordained concomitants of virtue, this is argued on psychological grounds—in direct contradiction to Kantian psychology.[1] The relative merits of the two men cannot be debated here: in point of philosophic breadth, consistency, and originality, few would deny Kant's considerable superiority. The peculiar strength of Chalmers' views, by contrast, will probably be allowed to stem from the constant attention he gives to the concrete actuality of human nature: he is not prone to accept the sharp dichotomies and over-neat abstractions in which the Critical Philosophy abounds. Specifically, he anticipates the criticism of later Scotsmen, with greater knowledge of Kant, who were to find the agnosticism of the Critique of Pure Reason and the limited moral faith of the Critique of Practical Reason mutually incongruous. Be this as it may, Chalmers sensed in Kant a kindred mind, awakened from dogmatic slumber by Hume, and aroused to counter his modified scepticism in the name of moral reality. And this sense of affinity—which had considerable foundation in fact—persisted in the Scottish mind, and helps to explain the remarkable influx of German thinking in Scotland during the latter part of the nineteenth century.

(B) Proofs of a more conventional sort—the "cosmological" and "teleological," loosely grouped together as a posteriori proofs—have a place in the comprehensive argument of the Natural Theology, although it

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1. The adjustment of happiness to virtue is said to betoken the superintendence of a beneficent Deity. (Cf. Natural Theology, I, pp. 352-83). The third form of the moral proof begins with the premise that habit works to the strengthening of the virtuous character and to the annihilation of the vitious. This is seen as a further adjustment of nature to moral ends, and a mark of God's moral sovereignty over nature. (Ibid., pp. 383-404).

is a limited place. Far from constituting the foundation of the science, they are ancillary to the dominant moral element in Chalmers' thinking. They are held to establish the bare probability that, behind the cosmic order which surrounds and undergirds man's incarnate existence, there is a supreme Designer and Governor, who is therefore the Benefactor and Sovereign of mankind. While this probability must fall considerably short of being certain knowledge, Chalmers urges that it is sufficient to set a man of sensitive conscience on the quest of a fuller knowledge of God, and thus prepare his mind to receive the full and clear revelation given in Christianity. Natural theology fulfills its function only when it has accomplished this.

It has already been indicated that the ascendency of *a posteriori* proofs in the eighteenth century, and the form of inductive reasoning in which they were cast, reflected the profound respect of that age for the scientific method perfected by Newton.[1] If Chalmers gives *a posteriori* reasonings a limited, and even subordinate, place in arguing the theistic case, it was not because he had any less respect for science and the scientific temper that had so powerfully influenced the mind of the age. His devotion to natural science in all its branches was first evident during undergraduate days at St. Andrews, continued when he later instructed in mathematics, chemistry, and kindred subjects at the University, and persisted even when his mind was given over largely to specifically theological and ecclesiastical studies. In the *Natural Theology*, the conclusions of contemporary science provide the details, upon which the *a posteriori* proof is a generalization.[2] Moreover, the character of the Scottish Philosophy

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1. *Supra*, p. 20.

2. Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 189-279. While Chalmers' own thought patterns reflect the static notions of Newtonian physics, he was aware of contemporary speculations in the fields of geology and biology which were to revolutionize

was largely determined by the attempt to apply the methods of physical science to the study of the mind. To arrive at first principles, Reid had proposed that the only valid procedure was by induction from the elemental perceptions of human consciousness. And the contributions of Scotsmen to what has since become the "science of psychology" were considerable. The philosophical outlook Chalmers received from Reid could only confirm his respect for the achievements of science and the nature of scientific thinking. There is in his teaching not the slightest trace of the iconoclasm that lurks behind Carlyle's passionate moralism. In fact, he readily allows the theistic argument to be formed by the requirements of the prevailing scientific temper. "We confess that our chief value for the experimental argument, is because of its special adaptation to the habitude of those minds which are disciplined in the methods and investigations of Physical Science."[1]

Confidence in all forms of inductive reasoning had been shaken, however, by Hume's contention that every induction is a species of "moral reasoning" based upon the causal principle, and that this principle, on inspection, may be traced to nothing but a passional custom of the human mind in response to the repeated sequence of two contiguous events.[2] And

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the mind of the nineteenth century. The work of Cuvier is cited to support a "Geological Proof for a Commencement of our present Terrestrial Economy." (Ibid., p. 228ff.) While Chalmers died twelve years before the publication of Darwin's Origin of Species, the principle of natural selection is weighed and criticized--adversely--in the Natural Theology. (Ibid., p. 265ff.)

1. Review of Morell's Speculative Philosophy of Europe, op. cit., p. 488.

2. Hume's reasoning is generally as follows: it is to be admitted that the idea of causality involves three essential elements, the contiguity, sequence, and necessary connexion of two events. But analysis shows that only the first and second are traceable to direct experience--that is, to an impression of sense. The last is discovered to be an addition of the subjective consciousness--a custom attendant upon the constant repetition of the objective sequence. And the custom, like the objective sequence, is itself in the cause-effect sequence, being the effect of repeated experience

the theistic argument in particular was further shaken by Hume's view that the world is a "singular effect," unlike any experienced effect of an experienced cause, and that consequently the analogy of Divine creativity to the human has not the slightest rational force.

> When two species of object have always been observed to be conjoined together, I can infer, by custom, the existence of one wherever I see the existence of the other: And this I call an argument from experience. But how this argument can have place, where the objects ... are single, individual, without parallel, or specific resemblance, may be difficult to explain. And will any man tell me with a serious countenance, that an orderly universe must arise from some thought and art, like the human; because we have experience of it?[1]

Despite Hume's somewhat incredulous question, Chalmers maintains that an orderly universe does occasion the inference to a supreme Thought and Artistry very like the human, does so on the basis of adequate experience, and that the inference is therefore entirely legitimate. He professes to accept the conditions that Hume would impose upon the argument.

> We concede to him his own premises—even that we are not entitled to infer an antecedent from its consequent, unless we have before had the completed observation of both these terms and of the succession between them. We disclaim the aid of all new or questionable principles in meeting this objection and would rest the argument a posteriori for the being of a God, on a strictly experimental basis.[2]

To obviate the difficulty raised by the "singular effect" argument, Chalmers introduces considerations intended to show that the orderly universe exhibits properties which characterize every work of human contrivance. And in

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in the past, and the cause of anticipations as to the future, that when a known cause appears, it will be followed by the customary effect, or, that when a known effect appears, it has been immediately preceded by its customary cause. (Cf. Treatise, I, III, sections II to VI (pp. 73-94); also, N. K. Smith, The Philosophy of David Hume, pp. 88-95; 365-403.)

1. Dialogues, Part II, pp. 149-50.

2. Natural Theology, I, p. 138. There is in this passage an implied criticism of Reid, Dugald Stewart, and others in the Scottish School. Following Thomas Brown, Chalmers holds that they needlessly multiplied first principles to butress the theistic inference—that only one is necessary: namely, an "aboriginal faith in the uniformity of nature's sequences," an "instinctive expectation of a constancy in the succession

accordance with the same principles by which inference is made, for example, from a watch to a human watchmaker, the mind moves from the observed cosmos to its Maker.

> On comparing a work of nature with a work of human art, we find a posterior term common to both—not adaptation for the end, because each has its own specific use, and the one use is distinct from the other—but adaptation for an end. It is on the strength of this similarity that we can carry the inference of a designing cause from the seen to the unseen in specimens of human handiwork; and, by a stepping-stone in every way as sure, from the seen handiwork of man to the unseen handiwork of God. In each we behold not subservience to the same end, but subserviency to an end—and on this generality in the consequent of each, we infer for each an antecedent of like generality—a mind of commensurate wisdom to devise, and of commensurate power to execute, either of the structures that are placed before our eyes.[1]

Reduced to its essentials, the argument is a refinement of Paley's well-known reasoning by analogy. It affirms that the ordered world and works of human contrivance are of a common species in so far as they exhibit variously the adaptation of parts to general ends. Since works of human contrivance are constantly experienced in conjunction with the ordering minds of men as their essential cause, therefore, from the similar works of nature, inference is made to a similar Mind.

Whether it is possible to observe adaptation for an end without discovering the particular end adaptation subserves, whether natural order implies design and therefore a Great Designer, whether a Common Sense

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of events" which is anterior to experience, and is constantly being "modified and restrained by it." "The constancy of nature and man's faith in that constancy do not stand related to each other like the terms of a logical proposition, or in the way of cause and consequence. There is a most beneficent harmony between the material and the mental law—but it is altogether a contingent harmony." (Ibid, p. 124.)

1. Ibid., pp. 157-8. In this connection, Chalmers' draws a distinction between the "laws of matter" and the "dispositions of matter"—a distinction later accepted and taken up by J. S. Mill. McCosh suggests (op. cit., pp. 402-3) that it might more appropriately be termed a distinction between the "properties of matter" and its "dispositions" according to organized forms or systems in space and time, which are self-perpetuating and/or self-generating: e.g., chemical and physical properties are to be discovered in

"belief" in the absolute regularity of nature justifies the inference in the face of Hume's critical account of causation—these and other questions were raised by Chalmers and bequeathed to later Scottish natural theologians. This was his chief contribution to the discussion of theoretical principles, a limited but a significant one. It is important, however, to notice as precisely as possible the force he attributes to the argument. Strictly taken, it professes to be nothing more than an argument to a very wise and powerful Cause of the ordered universe, and not to a Being of absolute power and perfections.[1] Chalmers does not feel the need to supplement the conclusion of the a posteriori reasoning by any "ontological" or speculative considerations.[2] For it is not by this means he believes the knowledge essential to religion is to be had. Inductive reasoning can at best establish a probability commensurate with the weight of "experimental evidence" that can properly be claimed to butress the theistic view; religion demands knowledge of God. But Chalmers can be content with a very limited conclusion, because he believes it is sufficient to activate the moral nature of man. Whatever the attributes and powers of the Being who orders the universe, man receives from Him the nature of his incarnate existence and the attendant conditions that make it possible. As the Benefactor of mankind, declared by the witness of conscience to stand on the side of virtue

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the matter forming vegetable or animal organisms. It is from the dispositions of matter, in which its laws or properties are utilized to achieve some end or other, that Chalmers would derive the theistic argument. The dispositions, if not the properties, betoken design. Cf. Ibid., pp. 189-228.

1. Cp. the passage drawn from the writings of Thomas Brown which Chalmers cites in summary of his own view of the "natural attributes" of God: Ibid., II, pp. 361-4.

2. While holding that a posteriori reasonings are the only sound basis for philosophy, and that a priori systems lack meaning and solidity of principle, Chalmers does not eschew them entirely. As pure speculation based only on plausible analogies, they cannot claim to be satisfactory philosophy; but as antidotes to the agnostic speculation of Hume, they deserve respect. While the speculative theist engages the speculative antitheist in aerial combat, empirical philosophy advances to consolidate the position of Common Sense and faith on the solid ground of observation. Cf. Ibid., I, pp. 99-120.

and goodness, He deserves all the gratitude and service that the sensitive conscience would render.

> Our conclusion on the whole is that no alleged defect of evidence in Natural Theology can extinguish the use of it.... Even the faint and distant probabilities of the subject, may still lay upon us the duty of careful and strenuous inquisition; and that, long anterior to our full acquaintance with the certainties of the subject. The verisimilitudes of the question are the signal posts, by following the intimations of which, we are at length conducted to the verities of the question. Although Natural Theology, therefore, should fail to illuminate, yet, by a moral force upon the attention, it may fully retain the power to impel .... It has indeed discharged its most important function, if, at the point where its guesses or its discoveries terminate, it leaves us with as much light as should make us all awake to the further notices of a God, or as shall leave our heedlessness wholly inexcusable.[1]

On Chalmers' view, natural theology is first and last a theology of conscience.

(C) What, then, is Chalmers' contribution to the Scottish development of demonstrative theism? It is clear, of course, and may be taken for granted, that a wide gulf separates the "theology of conscience" from the "academic demonstrations" that were the core of rationalistic theology in the eighteenth century. To hold Chalmers' doctrines to the standard of logically coercive, or "apodictic," demonstration is to misunderstand the meaning and force they had for him and for contemporary Scotland. To make the aims and methods of eighteenth century England or nineteenth century Germany normative would undoubtedly leave Scottish natural theology in a very unfavorable light—without doing justice to its alternative insights.

Chalmers' Natural Theology is not characterized by a thorough consistency and precision of doctrine that ought to be the marks of any professedly scientific treatment of theistic argument. In part, this may

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1. Ibid., II, pp. 414-6.

be accounted for by the fact that Chalmers wrote for a wide public and in a "popular" vein suited to a generally educated mind--not in a language designed for specialists in either philosophy or theology. The development of a highly technical vocabulary and the limitation of interest in such matters to specialists was brought about toward the end of the nineteenth century, although intellectual "professionalism" never became the fetish in Scotland that it was elsewhere. But more important in accounting for the want of consistency and precision in Chalmers' thinking is the element of uncertainty and hesitation it contains--undoubtedly a reflection of the contemporary intellectual environment that had been deprived of its old confidence in order and reason. Quite apart from the outward confusions occasioned by revolutions and despotisms, social upheavals and economic rivalries, that affected the whole of Europe, there were the inward confusions attendant upon the disintegration of older ways of thought and belief. And Hume, of course, had contributed much to accelerate the disintegration.

Chalmers' Natural Theology is a "transitional work," reflecting many characteristics of the foregoing "age of order," but at the same time moving out in search of a more satisfactory foundation of belief. In general, Chalmers may be said to represent a growing tendency away from the externalism and "scientific objectivity" that had prevailed in Reid's time toward a new inwardness, a new insistence that man's interior life be given full weight in making up the case for theism. Reid's professed aim of applying the inductive principles of natural science to the study of the human mind appears in retrospect to have succeeded in "naturizing" human nature in a thoroughly Newtonian fashion. He generalized upon the data,

or facts, of consciousness, systematizing the whole in accordance with a number of first principles, of which the axioms of mathematics continued to be a leading example—as in the rationalistic view of Locke. This characteristic teaching of Reid is retained by Chalmers, as has already been shown, in connection with the distinction between the "ethics" of theology and its "objects." But beside this stands Chalmers' doctrine of conscience and his moral proof, emphasizing the inward, immediate, and distinctively human indications of consciousness as to the nature of ultimate reality. Moral consciousness provides an "inkling" or clue as to the spiritual interior of the Universe. Its compulsions body forth an order of being that will not be regarded with entire objectivity and disinterested judgment. And it is in this moral order of being that Chalmers finds the roots of natural religion.

With this greater preoccupation with a distinctively human facet of nature, new questions arise—or rather, old questions in a more acute form. Chalmers makes himself more open than Reid to the charge of anthropomorphism, not only in respect of man's conscience, but also in reasoning by analogy from human contrivance to the Divine. Since the dawn of philosophy in Greece, anthropomorphism has generally been held to be, or approximate, an outright error in determining the character of the Deity. Unfortunately, Chalmers nowhere deals directly with the obvious dangers of forming God in man's image. But the drift of his thought indicates that he was not entirely unaware of them. On the whole, it is plain that while Chalmers' natural theology is insistently anthropocentric, it is reluctantly anthropomorphic. In so far as the mind must rely upon spare analogies between the attributes and works of man, and the attributes and works of God, he refuses to treat its conclusions as anything but probabilities—tenuous

probabilities at that. This is something of a concession to the force of Hume's arguments. But in so far as all human thought is conditioned by, and a condition of, human consciousness, Chalmers feels justified in the insistence that natural theology be grounded upon that which is most immediate and most imperative in consciousness. For him, this means the fact of a sovereign conscience. Man is moral, and will be moral, whatever the darkness that overshadows the reasonings of his intellect. His course is therefore plain. Personal obedience and gratitude to an impersonal order in response to unintended demands and benefactions are inconsistent with the testimony of conscience as to the moral nature of the universe. Conscience demands a moral being as its moral object, and where it does not obviously have one and feels the need of one, it will impel a search for one. This, according to Chalmers, is the imperative underlying all the reasonings of the natural theologian. The authoritative judgments of conscience upon man's "inward desires and outward doings," and its awareness of indebtedness for the benefactions of nature, all set conscience on the quest of a supreme Governor and Benefactor. And the quest ends, for Chalmers at least, with the revelation of God given in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

For Chalmers, as for Reid and Halyburton, it is revelation alone that can satisfy the demands of conscience and supply what is lacking to his natural powers of intellect. Christianity provides the ultimate and certain truth about God's Being, His infinite attributes, and His inflexible purpose of righteousness and love. As compared with revealed doctrine, the conclusions of natural theology occupy an extremely small and narrowly circumscribed place. They provide no fixed norm of truth by which professed

revelations can be authenticated or rationally established. Christian theology is not in the least dependent upon it, but is verified by "the light of heaven," by the "inner testimony of the Spirit." But natural theology performs an invaluable service to Christian truth by bringing to clear focus the needs and questionings that are forced upon man by his own nature, and for which the Christian Gospel brings the only solution.

> He is egregiously wrong, (who) speaks of Natural Theology being the basis of Christianity, in the same way that the foundation to a house is to its superstructure, or a premise in argument is of its conclusion. He utterly mistakes the law and nature of this succession. It is true that Natural Theology comes before Christianity, not syllogistically, however, but historically, not in order of demonstration, but in order of human sentiment and feeling. The one precedes the other just as the sufferings and anxieties of distress precede the inquiry after relief, and then the actual finding of its efficacy.[1]

The tendency toward greater inwardness in dealing with human nature marks a further step in the development of Scottish demonstrative theism. And this of course was in keeping with a decided trend of thought in the first half of the nineteenth century, that received most striking expression in the Romantic Movement. Chalmers' views of the Movement, influenced no doubt by the Edinburgh Review, seem not to have been entirely favorable. What his indebtedness may have been, if any, would be very difficult to assess. But on the whole, this discernable tendency in his thinking on questions of natural theology seems to owe more to his own intense Christian piety than to any external influence. It is plain enough from the history of his early rejection of natural theology to his final acceptance of it that Chalmers was a convinced Christian before he became a natural theologian. And no appraisal of his theistic doctrine can disregard the fact that his acknowledged greatness lay in his extraordinary

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1. Review of Morell's Speculative Philosophy of Europe, op. cit., p. 491.

power as a preacher, pastor, and leader of the Church. Some would maintain without hesitancy that he was "the greatest preacher which Scotland has produced," and while "not the most intellectual or emotional speaker of his age," he was, nevertheless, the "most practically influential, spreading his power over the length and breadth of Scotland."[1] His was the rare moral and spiritual force of one unreservedly committed to the truth of the Christian revelation of God. In seeking spiritual sustenance for his own intensely inward faith, he turned to the devotional writings of Halyburton, Jonathan Edwards and Erskine of Linlathen. From these he must certainly have gained increased confidence in the conviction that man's innermost life is made for communion with God, and that when He speaks to man, He addresses one whom He has made and destined for Himself.[2]

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1. McCosh, op. cit., pp. 397-9. The verdict is appropriate as coming from one who himself enjoyed a considerable reputation as philosopher, natural theologian, and authority on the history of "the Scottish Philosophy."

2. Cp. esp. Thomas Erskine on the relation of the Christian Gospel to the "inward revelation in conscience:" Remarks on the Internal Evidence for the Truth of Revealed Religion (Edinburgh, 1823), pp. 51-3, 175-6; The Spiritual Order and Other Papers (Edinburgh, 1871), pp. 258-60. Cf. also the letter quoted in H. F. Henderson, Erskine of Linlathen (Edinburgh, 1899), p. 23. As has been indicated (supra, p. 111), Erskine formulated a moral proof for the existence of a spiritual and Divine order: cf. The Spiritual Order, pp. 11, 14, 47-49.

So great was Chalmers' admiration of Erskine's writings, that a friend once remarked, "It seems to me that the Gospel has never appeared to him in any different light from that in which Mr. Erskine represents it." (Memoirs, III, p. 246.)

CHAPTER IV

NATURALISM AND NATURAL THEOLOGY: THE THEISM OF JOHN TULLOCH

To say, with Chalmers, that man is by nature a creature of conscience is an affirmation that is far from being entirely unambiguous, however. What he intended by this view is plain enough in the context of his wide-ranging interests and convictions. What it could mean when some would attempt, not only to apply the method of natural science to the study of mind and spirit—as did Chalmers himself, but beyond that to resolve all spiritual phenomena directly or indirectly into a few empirically ascertained natural principles—this, Chalmers was not able to foresee. It seemed imperative to Scottish theists a generation later to disentangle natural theology from the encroachments of an expanding "naturalism."[1] And Principal John Tulloch may be regarded as their representative. Believing as surely as did Chalmers that man's spiritual being is intimately involved in the order and system of the natural cosmos, his primary concern is to show its uniqueness and its supremacy over the realm of cause and effect. The human spirit distinguishes itself by asserting its freedom from the "laws of nature," and its power to exercise control

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1. The term is to be taken in the broadest possible sense, as including all systems flourishing at the middle of the nineteenth century which would limit scientific and philosophic attention to whatever of reality is ordered within space and time, without reference to any transcendent, or supernatural reality. It thus includes not only materialism, but various forms of Positivism, radical empiricism, and agnostic science.

over them. In this, Tulloch finds the evidence of a higher spiritual order. His theistic doctrine is unequivocally anthropocentric: the reality of man's spiritual freedom and dignity is the ground upon which the demonstration of God's infinite spirituality and perfections is to be based. Tulloch's doctrine is expressed most succintly in a favorite aphorism: Nullus spiritus in Microcosmo, nullus Deus in Macrocosmo.

The primary theistic task, as Tulloch conceives it, is thus to vindicate the reality and rights of spirit—both human and Divine—in the face of current philosophies that would interpret the whole of experience without remainder in accordance with a "Law of Universal Causation," as John Stuart Mill termed it. What is strikingly apparent in passing to this from Chalmers' conception of natural theology is its formulation in terms of the main currents of contemporary thought within and beyond the borders of Scotland, in England, and indeed throughout Europe. Chalmers had remained a self-consciously Scottish thinker, defending positions reached by earlier Scottish theologians and philosophers against external criticism.[1] Tulloch at the middle of the century shuns any appearance of provincialism, and in formulating the central theme of his own writings, he states the issue as it was widely debated far beyond limited theological circles, by contemporaries of many callings and persuasions:

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1. E.g., cp. his appraisal of Kant and German thought: supra, pp. 105, n.2, & 114. The chief obstacle in the way of a more cosmopolitan outlook—for Chalmers and the great majority of his contemporaries—was the language barrier. Chalmers knew French and thus was able to read the works of scientists and philosophers using French—including Leibnitz. He knew no German. Carlyle did great service for his countrymen in mastering German and translating outstanding German literature into English. Tulloch studied in Germany as well as in France, inaugurating a new era of theological scholarship among his countrymen.

> The question with which they deal in diverse application is the great question of contemporary thought, in comparison with which all other questions are of little moment—Is there a spiritual world? Is there a metaphysical as well as a physical basis of life? Is Reason or Soul, in other words, an entity, and not a mere manifestation of nervous force—a life behind all other life, and not merely the highest and most complex phase of natural life?[1]

Tulloch is more truly a representative of his times, than was Chalmers of his. He maintains a studied openness to contemporary life and thought in every quarter. Conversely, while his thinking is much less provincial than Chalmers', it is more eclectic, and reflects—rather than affects—the broad tendencies and influences prevailing at the middle of the nineteenth century. It would be difficult to encompass in a short space the numerous factors that entered into the thinking of Europeans during this transitional period, but in general they may be seen as adhering to one or the other of two conflicting movements of thought. There was on the one hand the Romantic Movement, which had originated in protest and reaction to the formalism, the narrow intellectualism, and spiritual superficiality of the eighteenth century. It had come to full flower in Chalmers' lifetime, and by mid-century had receded. Yet, its influences remained, permeating the outward formalism of the succeeding "Victorian Era." In its various forms it had taught men to value the subjective elements of human consciousness, to affirm the life of the individual against most forms of external compulsion, to seek out the history of human development as the proper meaning and purpose of reality, and in general to humanize the whole of nature—in imagination at least—in opposition to those who would naturalize man. The faith of Naturalism, on

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1. Modern Theories in Philosophy and Religion (Edinburgh & London, 1884), Preface, p. v. In context, the passage has reference to the essays of the volume.

the other hand, continued to gain acceptance. It had developed in the wake of Hume's criticism of eighteenth century rationalism. Viewed in one perspective, it resulted from the translation of Hume's "double-minded" and essentially Scottish point of view into an environment of thought molded by the older rationalism: in such a setting, Hume's modified scepticism became a conclusive refutation of all religious metaphysics. The alternative seemed to be a radical empiricism, founded upon the principle that the only valid knowledge is that which may be reached by inference from direct sense experience, as in scientific induction, and that the universe of reality may be measured by this method. The proponents of Naturalism, in support of their faith, claimed the weight of prodigious achievements in science, technology, and social experimentation. The middle period of the nineteenth century has been described by Professor Whitehead as "an orgy of scientific triumph"--its orgiastic character arising from the real achievements of scientific thinking in conjunction with the faith of expanding Naturalism in the limitless possibilities of scientific achievement. Romanticism on the one side and Naturalism on the other, conditioned the thought of Tulloch's contemporaries. And it will be found, that in speaking for himself, Tulloch also speaks for an age that was seeking to strike a balance between the relative truths of the one and the other. It should be added, however, that Tulloch's primary allegiance --as Chalmers' --is to Christian truth: it everywhere affects his judgment of contemporary beliefs, though it, in turn, is affected by them.

Tulloch's liberation from the provincialism that clung to Chalmers' natural theology, and his sensitiveness to the general mind of the age were no accident of temperament; they are the bi-products of a new and consciously developed theological method. In the capacity of Principal and

Professor of Divinity at St. Mary's College, St. Andrews, Tulloch acquired a considerable reputation as a student of the history of theology. As historian and critic, he was thus among the first of a distinguished line of Scottish theologians who have labored for clarity, breadth, and depth of religious thought by setting Christian and theistic doctrine in the light of history. Apart from his Burnett Prize Essay of 1855 entitled Theism: The Witness of Reason and Nature to an All-Wise and Beneficent Creator, Tulloch's contributions to the development of theistic thinking in Scotland are made entirely in the form of critical observations upon past and current doctrines, theistic and anti-theistic. The most celebrated of these studies is the two-volume work on Rational Theology and Christian Philosophy in England in the Seventeenth Century, published in 1872. There were in addition two other works in which his own critical principles are more apparent: the Modern Theories in Philosophy and Religion (1884), and a series of St. Giles' Lectures entitled, Movements of Religious Thought During the Nineteenth Century (1885). It would probably be too bold a venture to attempt to trace this new departure in theological method to a single primary influence. Tulloch undoubtedly was indebted to more than one. He studied in Germany where the principles of modern historical criticism had already been laid down, and where Church historians--such as Neander, with whose work he was intimately acquainted--had pointed the way to a historical method in theology. There is reason to believe, however, that he did not assimilate this influence entirely, for he shows little interest in broad historical movements and tendencies. His historical method is akin to intellectual biography, and in this respect seems particularly indebted to the development of historical study among his own

countrymen. It is a correlative aspect of Scottish anthropocentrism in theology and philosophy—this attention given to history, instinctive but undeveloped in Halyburton's discussion of "natural light," brought to critical consciousness in Hume's historical works, romanticized in the novels and biographies of Scott and Carlyle, and first utilized systematically in Tulloch's own time as a means toward broader intellectual perspectives and deeper insights. Whatever "philosophy of history" Tulloch may be said to have is closely akin to Carlyle's in this respect: he is concerned above all with the succession of men who have contributed most to the knowledge and belief of mankind. Robert Flint, somewhat later, was to reshape the historical method in theological study, and give it the form it has retained ever since.

In passing from Chalmers to Tulloch, considerable transformation of thought has obviously taken place, which decisively modifies the further course of theistic development.[1] "Liberalism" is the term that was early appropriated by those who undertook to free human thought and action from

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1. Differences of temperament and ecclesiastical loyalty should not be left entirely out of account in characterizing the transition from Chalmers to Tulloch, although they are of minor importance. At the time of the "Great Disruption" of the Scottish Church in 1843, Tulloch was a student of divinity, with strong sympathies for the cause of the Free Church group. He remained, nevertheless, in the Established Church, and in later years became its foremost defender against the declared purpose of Gladstone to disestablish the Church of Scotland. Moreover, Tulloch did not subscribe to the "evangelicism" of the church party to which Chalmers gave his allegiance, being himself a convinced Moderate. Still, though cast in a role antithetic to Chalmers', he did not underestimate the greatness of his Christian stature, nor the importance of his contributions to the life of the church and to the stimulation of Christian and theistic thought. Cf. his Theism, pp. 8, 18, & 214; also Movements of Religious Thought, pp. 143 & 161.—Details of Tulloch's life are all drawn from an absorbing biography by Mrs. M. O. Oliphant entitled, A Memoir of the Life of John Tulloch, D.D., LL.D. (Edinburgh & London, 1888).

the limitations imposed by previous ages of intellectual, moral, and spiritual attainment. Liberalism in Scotland was in most respects a direct continuation of the older "Moderatism," although that term had since passed into general disfavor. The same characteristics of tolerance, intellectual liberality, moral earnestness, broad cultural interest, and philosophic acumen are retained by the new liberalism, and intensified. John Tulloch's writings exemplify each of these qualities in a notable degree, and it is clear that he would associate himself unreservedly with the development of Scottish "liberalism" which he characterized in these words: referring to the third and fourth decades of the nineteenth century, he writes,

> There has seldom been in our national history a more fruitful epoch of religious thought. And the same general character is more or less stamped on all its manifestations, various as these otherwise are. This character may be said to be expansiveness. The theological mind is seen opening in all directions. There is a general breaking up of the old close traditional systems transmitted from the earlier time. The idea of God as the loving Father of all men—of the religious life as having its root in immediate contact with the Divine, rather than in adherence to any definite forms whether of Church belief or Church order; the recognition of the religious consciousness as a pervading element of human nature with its own rights in the face of Revelation, and especially in the face of the scholastic dogmas which had been based on Revelation; the desire after a more concrete and living faith merging into one the abstractions of theological nomenclature; and more than all perhaps an optimist Catholic ideal displacing the sectarian ideals of the older schools of thought; all these larger features meet us with more or less prominence.[1]

This "expansiveness" of the new Liberalism, as Tulloch conceives it, is obviously not just a heterogeneous accumulation of fact and experience to illustrate older creeds and convictions; it is at its center the "opening of the theological mind in all directions" in order to unify and comprehend every true religious insight within a single "optimist Catholic ideal."

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1. Movements of Religious Thought, p. 167. The underlining has been added to the text.

The possibility of attaining to such an ideal is grounded in the ultimate and essential conviction that man is constituted a spiritual being: religious consciousness is "a pervading element of human nature with its own rights in the face of revelation." In maintaining this view, whether in a specifically Christian or broadly theistic context, Tulloch is motivated by the belief that he moves with the tide of contemporary thinking toward a more liberal and comprehensive creed.[1]

When the specific problems and content of theistic doctrine are isolated from the larger body of theological thinking, it is possible to observe in some detail what logic there is in the development from Chalmers to Tulloch. It is true, of course, that religious philosophy, like most intellectual disciplines with the exception of physical science, was affected by the particular kind of humanism and optimism that had been generated by the Romantic outlook. Tulloch's debt to Coleridge, the arch-Romantic, will prove a case in point. To some extent, the "logic" of the liberal tendency is that of instinctive reaction against the limitations, the artificialities,

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1. In tracing the development of religious thought in Scotland from the beginning of the nineteenth century to his own time, Tulloch adjudges the tendency toward liberalism its outstanding characteristic. His studies of Scottish religious thought are invaluable for the general resource material they contain. (Lecture IV of his Movements of Religious Thought deals with Scottish thought from the beginning of the century to the Great Disruption; an article in the Contemporary Review of March, 1877 (Vol. XXIX, No. 3), entitled "Progress of Religious Thought in Scotland," carries the account onward to the time of writing.)

Tulloch points out that the Confessionalist tradition—which was continued in the Free Church by Drs. Cunningham and Candlish after Chalmers' death—was gradually modified and transformed by a number of writers. Thomas Erskine of Linlathen, John Macleod Campbell, and Edward Irving were native-born. Carlyle's writings also were a germinating influence in the religious thinking of Scotland. From England, the effect of Coleridge's speculations, the writings of Maurice and Kingsley, the sermons of F. W. Robertson, was slowly being assimilated. And from Germany, the religious doctrine of Kant, Schleiermacher, and the Hegelians began to be heard. Tulloch himself was more or less acquainted with all these diverse representatives of the new "liberalism" he himself espoused.

of an age too ready to compress moral and religious experience within the mold of orderly and comprehensible systems. Nevertheless, Scottish liberalism also contained a knowledgeable criticism of the older natural theology, and one of far-reaching consequences. Tulloch's essay on Theism, while not first-rate as a work of original and constructive theistic argument,[1] suggestively criticizes the intent of establishing the existence and attributes of God, apart from any professed Revelation to men, by inference from the constitutive elements of human experience. In general, the criticism is two-fold.

(i) Tulloch urges that it is inconsistent and impossible to found a valid theistic argument on a view that places the distinctive attributes of human consciousness on a plane with the "merely natural." This had been the bent of natural theology from Reid to Chalmers. In answer to Hume, it had been argued generally that rational principles and moral imperatives are of the essence of man's being, and must be included within the concept of nature. In so far as this doctrine is intended to do justice to the fact of "man's involvement in nature"—as it has been termed in more recent times—Tulloch assents to it. "It is undeniable that man's intellectual and moral being, in all its most subtle and complex

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1. Tulloch received the second award from the Burnett trust in 1855, the first being given to a Rev. R. A. Thompson of Lincolnshire. Whatever the merits of Thompson's work, Tulloch's probably received its due: it is not the best among his own works.—The Burnett Trust, founded in 1785 by John Burnett, an Aberdeen Merchant, provided two prizes to be awarded at intervals of forty years for essays dealing with natural theology, theistic difficulties, and the relation of natural religion to Christianity. The prizes were first awarded in 1815—occasioning the first extended modern treatment of Natural Theology by a Scot (W. L. Brown's Essay on the Existence of a Supreme Creator); they were given for the last time in 1855. Funds of the trust were diverted to other purposes because of the impatience of hard-headed trustees, and perhaps also in part because the natural theology envisioned by the Deed of Trust was rapidly passing out of fashion—dispatched by the Scottish idealists.

manifestations, shows the same order that we everywhere discover in nature."[1] But he questions the wisdom of insisting upon it in order to provide a foundation for scientific induction, and to conform to the scientific "habitude" that had possessed contemporary thought. It was this, of course, that had shaped Chalmers' thought, and informed the view that moral consciousness is an integral aspect of the natural order. His insistence upon a posteriori method in all philosophical reasoning was a mark of high respect for the achievements and possibilities of scientific induction. Tulloch points out that it is only a short step from the assertion that theistic argument may—indeed, must—be cast in the form of a scientific induction to the view that all conscious experience be subject to the same order, the same laws, the same causal principles, that apply in analyzing the data of the natural sciences. This step had been taken, by Bentham, the Mills, Comte, Lewes and others—giving rise to the naturalistic tendency that was continuing to gain force at mid-century. Tulloch readily concedes to Naturalism the greater consistency, as against the older natural theology.

> We are satisfied that the old motto is true, "Nullus spiritus, nullus Deus." It is not enough to recognize mind as well as sense, and to argue outwards towards a Divine mind. Unless we start with the Divine in man, we can never reach it in Nature. Unless we begin with a substantive spiritual entity, we can never find such an entity at all. Mind which is the mere growth of Nature, can never help us to pass beyond Nature.... A mere necessary condition of mind in us can never warrant the assumption of a Supreme Mind outside of us. Such an inference is open at once to all the force of the Kantian critcism against the old a priori argument, and all the force of modern criticism, on the ground of anthropomorphism. Mind, abstract it as we will, is a human experience, and except on the ground of some special affinity with the Divine, has no right to stand at the head of Nature.[2]

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1. Theism, p. 296.

2. Modern Theories in Philosophy and Religion, p. 120; cf. also, Theism, pp. 17-20. The somewhat diffuse reasonings of Tulloch's earliest work are summed up more succinctly in his later writings.

(ii) Tulloch urges further that to define natural theology by contrast to revelation, and--citing the critical instance--to distinguish sharply between the sphere of natural religious knowledge and that of Christian truth, is unsatisfactory. At least, in the light of contemporary appraisals of scientific knowledge, such a distinction tended as much to disrupt religious conviction as to support it. In maintaining the preeminence and perfections of Christian knowledge, Chalmers for one had set the most essential part of his own personal faith in a light uncongenial to the scientific mind. The genius of his natural theology had been to approach religious truth from the standpoint of science; but, like Halyburton before him, he had represented Christian truth as entirely discontinuous from the imperfect inferences of the natural reason, authenticated by a direct act of Divine grace through the inner witness of the Spirit. Tulloch writes of the "Evangelical School," in which he expressly includes Chalmers, that

> ...with all its merits, (it) had conceived of Christianity rather as something superadded to the highest life of humanity than as the perfect development of that life; as a scheme for human salvation authenticated by miracles, and, so to speak, interpolated into human history rather than a divine philosophy, witnessing to itself from the beginning in all the higher phases of that history. And so Philosophy, and no less Literature, and Art, and Science, were conceived apart from religion. The world and the Church were not only antagonistic in the biblical sense, as the embodiments of the Carnal and the Divine Spirit--which they must ever be; but they were, so to speak, severed portions of life divided by outward signs and badges. ...(These "commonplaces" of the Evangelical School) were essentially narrow and false. They destroyed the largeness and unity of human experience. They not merely separated religion from art and philosophy, but they tended to separate it from morality.[1]

The unsatisfactory character of the sharp distinction between the spheres of natural and revealed truth is indicated most simply by the assertion

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1. Movements of Religious Thought, p. 13; the underlining has been added to the text. Cf. also, Theism, pp. 78-80; 290-1; 313-15. It should be noted that all the implications of Tulloch's criticism do not apply to Chalmers.

that it is more in keeping with the scientific temper to rest with the limited and inconclusive inferences of Chalmers the natural theologian, than to go on to the supernatural faith of Chalmers the Christian. To vindicate the theistic view fully, Tulloch maintains that such a distinction must be overcome,—and can be. He argues that the natural and the supra-natural are conjoined in man. In the analysis of this conjunction lies the possibility of a comprehensive philosophy that will embrace both nature and spirit, the material, the human, and the Divine.

> The more deeply our whole being is studied, the more, we feel assured, will freedom and conscience, and in a word, reason, as forming the comprehensive spiritual element in man, be acknowledged as realities,—and Theism hence be found the ennobling complement of all human study, no less than the direct expression of Divine Revelation.[1]

Theistic development down to Tulloch's time was thus, in part at least, an advance through criticism of the older natural theology.[2]

Against the background of the larger movements of thought at the middle of the century, and the special circumstances that brought Tulloch into intimate contact with them, it is now possible to examine in greater detail his elaboration of the theistic argument. It will be advantageous to consider first (A) the moral aspects of his doctrine, which are its

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1. Ibid., p. 431. Again, the underlining has been added.

2. The older view sharply dividing the order of natural knowledge from that of revealed knowledge was "modernized" by Sir William Hamilton, the most distinguished Scottish philosopher of the nineteenth century. His philosophy of the "unconditioned" elaborated Reid's Common Sense doctrines in the direction of Kantian agnosticism, while at the same time it professed to establish the truths of religion upon the ground of a "moral faith." Hamilton did not elaborate the notion of a "moral faith." In its distinctively philosophic aspects, the development represented by Tulloch is a criticism of Hamilton's teachings. His most able critics were his own students, Henry Calderwood (The Philosophy of The Infinite, 1854) and James F. Ferrier (Institutes of Metaphysics, 1854). Tulloch was the contemporary and debtor of both. He was an intimate of Ferrier.

foundation. Then it will be possible to see (B) that the moral insight is expanded so as to establish a theoretical ground upon which "intellect" may effectively vindicate theistic convictions in the face of an expanding naturalism. This will lead in turn (C) to a final appraisal of Tulloch's own contribution to theistic development in Scotland: none before him had reached the conclusion that theistic argument is contingent upon the reality—the ontological "fixity," so to speak—of the human spirit. In more conventional terminology, Tulloch attained to the view that knowledge of God is to be had by reasoning from "the image of God" in man.

(A) It has been said of Hume that he came to his most characteristic doctrines "through the gateway of morals;" of Chalmers, that his natural theology is first and last a "theology of conscience." Now it must be said of Tulloch also that his theistic view is grounded upon the moral consciousness, whose self-disclosed essence is "the theistic fact round which, as their rational nucleus, all the others gather."[1] What that essence is, Tulloch usually indicates by the single word "freedom": "This fact of a free rational activity, or soul in man, is implied in every form of spiritual philosophy, and appears to constitute the essential basis of all theology."[2] He introduces a consideration that has no place at all in Chalmers' thinking, and which had felt the weight of Hume's hostile criticism.[3] It is not without significance, however, that Reid in his discussion of "the active powers," was among the first—if not the first—of modern philosophers to raise the problem of freedom, or "free will," to a place

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1. Theism, p. 292.

2. Ibid., p. 293.

3. Cf. Hume's chapter "Of Liberty and Necessity" in the first Enquiry, Section VIII.

of prime importance.[1] Tulloch brings into prominence a side of Scottish thought that has hitherto been noticed only in passing, and unequivocally asserts the dependence of the theistic case upon the fact of freedom. In this latter respect, he is distinctly a representative of the nineteenth century, and of Scottish thought approximating views reached elsewhere along other lines of development.

Freedom, according to Tulloch, is an ultimate fact of consciousness, a deliverance of Common Sense as Reid would put it. He makes use of the terminology employed by Reid in accounting for the "first principles of necessary truths," and specifically for the free-will principle as the cornerstone of ethics. The fact of freedom is experienced in its immediacy to be a "sense," "sentiment," or "feeling;" not only a "feeling of self," but a "feeling of what has been called self-determination or choice."[2] "...that we feel ourselves to be free, none can truly deny. This feeling--our deepest and most ineradicable consciousness--the doctrine of necessity (as the antithesis of a doctrine of freedom) cannot accept as a fact."[3] On the other hand, the rational character of the fact is indicated by describing it as an "idea" or "intuition of reason." As such, it is not to be reached as the result of reasoning, but is itself a ground of reasoning.

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1. Cf. Sidgwick's Outlines of the History of Ethics, p. 262: "The position of the question ... became materially different under the influence of the important reaction, initiated by Reid, against the whole manner of philosophizing that had led finally to Hume. Not only did the conviction of Free Will occupy a prominent place among the beliefs of Common Sense which, in the view of the Scottish school, it was the business of philosophy to define and defend; it was also generally held by this school to be an absolutely essential point of ethical doctrine."

2. Theism, p. 295.

3. Ibid., p. 300.

> ...It is not only not wonderful that we cannot understand freedom, but the fact is such in its very idea that it is impossible we ever can understand it, transcending as it necessarily does that logical power of which it is the condition.... We have no claim to comprehend it, for (as logicians) we do not contain it—it contains us.[1]

Thus, in general, Tulloch would describe the conviction of freedom in exactly the same way that Reid had dealt with first principles. The difference lies in what each takes to be the object of Common Sense: Reid holds it to be a body of first principles; Tulloch, an order of spiritual reality in which man finds himself in immediate relation to God.

When the "fact of freedom" delivered in moral consciousness is observed further, with a view to discovering its content, Tulloch finds that it has a binary character: it involves both <u>independence</u> and <u>dependence</u>, <u>liberty</u> and <u>order</u>. When compared with the order of Nature, "freedom" represents an "efficiency" or "power of self-determination" within the human spirit, which is "unconditioned by any natural cause." But when regarded as a manifestation of spirit, belonging to a distinct level of being apart from the "merely natural," "freedom" involves the relationing of this self-evident efficiency under the direction of "the All-efficient." That is, the freedom of which Tulloch speaks is not of a sort incompatible with <u>order</u> producing chaos in the matter of moral and spiritual relations; it is freedom subject to a higher spiritual order that manifests itself in and through the exercise of man's finite freedom, or power of self-determination. Spiritual freedom asserts itself emphatically "in opposition to the law of phenomena"—the mechanical regularity of the natural cosmos. At the same time it embodies within itself elements of which a distinct, spiritual cosmos is made. Thus, in the experience of freedom at the root of moral consciousness, Tulloch would ground the conviction that <u>spirit</u>

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1. <u>Ibid</u>., pp. 299-300.

resides in human nature, and is the immediate token of a sphere of being in which the reality of God is not only meaningful, but necessary.[1]

This view worked out in detail in the Theism, one of Tulloch's earliest convictions, was little developed in later writings. It remained, however, as the basic critical principle in every analysis of the issue between the naturalistic and the theistic views of life. Thus, in apprais-ing the arresting doctrines of John Stuart Mill—the attempt to fuse Romantic notions with the more consistent naturalism of his father and Bentham—Tulloch reverts to his familiar theme:

> The effect of (Mill's) thoroughgoing criticism has been to make clearer than before the roots of the great opposing lines of thought on which all higher speculation rests. In the end, on either side, a postulate stares us in the face. Man is either divine from the first—a free spiritual being standing apart from all nature,—or he is essentially material. On the latter basis, no religion in the old sense can be based. All attempts to find spirit in matter, if spirit is not already presupposed as prior to matter, is a mere futile imagination.[2]

If this immediate bearing of the doctrine of freedom upon the debate with naturalism be borne in mind, further elaboration may be deferred for the moment, so that the positive theistic argument may be seen in proper perspective. The "fact of freedom" and the "fact of conscience" together constitute the whole of that which is peculiarly the "moral consciousness." Both facts disclose intuitively, or in their immediacy, the reality and character of the spiritual order in which God is ultimate and supreme.

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1. The problem of freedom in a more precisely ethical sense centers upon the discussion of "motive." Tulloch concedes to "necessitarians" that "volition goes forth under motive." He takes issue with them only on the point of "What constitutes motive? What is the spring of the order which is universally admitted to obtain among the facts of man's spiritual being, no less than among all other facts?" (Ibid., pp. 296-7.) His own con-clusion is simply, in accordance with the general view, that "The spring of the soul's activity is ever within the soul.... According to a well known pithy saying of Coleridge, 'it is not the motive makes the man, but man the motive.'" (p. 298.)

2. Movements of Religious Thought, p. 244. Cf. also Modern Theories (Edinburgh, 1844), pp. v-vi, 53ff. 120-1, 158-60, 305-6, etc.

Tulloch sets conscience in much the same light that it had received from Butler and Chalmers. He is emphatically at one with Chalmers at this point in describing conscience as the agent of an insistent obligation, presiding over every conscious activity of mind. It is the source of all knowledge of duty, and has a de jure authority over the other activities of mind.[1] He also agrees that this authority has extraordinary force in confirming the theistic position: "The sense of government in every heart can only proceed from a living governor, who placed it there. The moral power within us, therefore, gives, as its immediate inference, a Divine Power above us."[2] A difference arises, however, in giving an account of the nature of the theistic "inference" from the authority that attaches to the "fact of conscience," and also to the "fact of freedom"—to the whole of moral consciousness. Tulloch argues that it is a "simpler," "more just and penetrating view" to affirm that "the authority which, in conscience, speaks to us is not merely something from which we may infer a divine Power, but is already the direct expression of that power."[3] In other words, man is a spiritual being under higher authority and is not himself in possession of it. Moral authority inheres in one who has a final right to it, unclouded or unconfused by extraneous influences. For this reason, it cannot belong to man whose view of moral reality is inconstant, variable, lacking often in necessary precision, and dissociated from the actual disposition of his will. Tulloch holds that it is more satisfactory to regard the undoubted authority disclosed in moral consciousness as an intuition of the transcendent fact of God and the Divine Will, immediately apprehended and not reached at the end of a logical induction from a fact inherent in the nature

1. Theism, pp. 312-13, 317-18.
2. Ibid., p. 312.
3. Ibid., p. 314.

of man.[1] This view is stated boldly and broadly in the following terms:

> We have in the very fact of conscience, the intuition of the Divine will, just as we have in the fact of self-existence the intuition of the Divine existence. As we cannot realize our being without at the same time realizing another and a higher Being, so we cannot become conscious of duty, without at the same time realizing another and a higher Will. The moral law is to us nothing more than the revelation of this higher or divine Will in the soul. We do not, therefore, need to rise from it to God, for it is already the voice of God within us. We are carried out of ourselves, so to speak, in the simple reality of conscience.[2]

Thus, at the root of moral consciousness lies a cognitive act by which the mind is brought into direct contact with the objective reality of God, who is its ground. Intuition "...unites the soul to objectivity by the very character of its affirmation in reason."[3] In a manner entirely analagous to the way in which sense perception brings the mind into direct contact with the objective facts of nature, intuition sets before it "the higher world of truth" that centers in God.[4] Tulloch urges that the objective reality of God—not rational First Principles—is the proper object of the higher Common Sense. "The infinite Presence...is the complement of man's spiritual being at all points."[5] God is known from within a direct personal relationship—known to be Personal Will and Reason, revealing His

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1. In defense of this position, Tulloch writes: "...it gives, in a psychological respect, a more discriminating and consistent interpretation of conscience, than when it is regarded as in itself both a perceptive and imperative faculty. Viewed simply as the organ of a higher power, its psychological dignity is at once vindicated, and its possible abuse readily understood. For let the organ be untrained or neglected, and its intuition will be dim and obscure, or even absolutely perverted. But let it be appropriately disciplined, and its intuition will rise into clearness and truth." (Ibid., p. 315.)

2. Ibid., p. 314.

3. Ibid., p. 331.

4. Cf. ibid., p. 319f. Tulloch's doctrine of "intuition" is very like Coleridge's view of "rational intuitions." He was intimately acquainted with Coleridge's thought. Cf. Movements of Religious Thought, pp. 6-34.

5. Theism, p. 327.

purpose of order and righteousness to men. And from the Sovereign Personality of God, the spiritual order in which man participates derives its most essential characteristics:

> This supernatural order is no mere ideal rule or law—a projection of our higher imagination or an invasion of "something not ourselves," whence we cannot tell. It is a divine reality,—a Personal Reason and Will like our own, enlightening, educating, controlling us. Morality, in the true sense, is conformity to this divine reality; Philosophy, in the highest sense, is our theory of its mode of being; and Theology, our knowledge of its activities and manifestations.[1]

The sovereign reality of God is the foundation of moral consciousness, known by intuition in and through the responsible exercise of human freedom. From the moral perfections of His Being—His supreme righteousness and goodness revealed to conscience—the constitutive sense of "authority" may be seen to follow readily.

The bearing of this doctrine of intuition upon the polemic with Naturalism will be seen to better advantage in the following section, dealing with its "intellectual" or "theoretical" aspects. Before going on to these all-important matters, however, it may be well to point out that Tulloch's notion of "intuition" involves a real distinction between the spirit who intuitively apprehends, and the Spirit who is apprehended. In this respect, he consciously dissociates his own view from Idealistic doctrines, monistic in character, and variously informed by the "principle of identity."[2] Though Tulloch is often found referring to man as "divine" or having "some special

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1. This illuminating passage is contained in the introduction to Tulloch's lectures on The Christian Doctrine of Sin (Edinburgh, 1876), p. 18.

2. German idealism was currently making its way into the British mind, though more in the form of imaginative insight than of precise exposition. Men of letters—poets, essayists—were the first to introduce the informed public to the teachings of the idealistic successors to Kant. Schelling was particularly influential, and his views were frequently mistaken—by Coleridge and Carlyle, for example—to be those of Kant. (Cf. Rene Wellek, Immanuel Kant in England, 1793-1838: Princeton, 1931.) In Scotland, Hamilton and

affinity with the Divine"—to conscience as "the voice of God within," these expressions are not construed as meaning that the human spirit is an integral manifestation of God's supreme and constitutive Spirit. Man is not to be identified with Nature, but much less is he to be identified with God. Moral intuition is an insight appropriate to his own distinctly human spirit. In this respect, Tulloch's doctrine is very like the view of intuition he discovered in Pascal's Pensees, by which he was directly and profoundly influenced.[1] With Pascal, he conceives the true theistic perspective to be a distinct alternative to "Pyrrhonism and Dogmatism, Montaigne and Epictetus," and—Tulloch himself adds—to "empiric materialism" and "transcendental dogmatism."[2] In the best Scottish tradition, Tulloch's theism remains a mediating philosophy. Common Sense thought, though transformed considerably, is still hostile to "gnostic" rationalism in its newer form.

Ferrier penetrated farther than most into the mysteries of the Idealistic idiom, stirring some to a proper philosophic interest. Also, Victor Cousin, the French eclectic who had mediated Scottish thought to the continent (in a series of lectures delivered first in 1819, and finally published in 1857 under the title, Philosophie Ecossaise), mediated continental idealism to Britain.

1. Tulloch published a short study of Pascal in 1878, mainly biographical. His early knowledge of the great French Jansenist was signalized in an article entitled, "Pascal—Christian Philosophy," published in the British Quarterly Review four years before the Theism was written (August, 1850; Vol. XII, pp. 139-69.) Pascal seems to have provided him with the idea and the inspiration to work out a "just and adequate Philosophy of Religion." Even at this early date, there is evidence that he read Pascal with the eyes of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, whose influence he was to feel increasingly and whose concept of "rational intuitions" was at variance with Pascal's "heart" or "reasons of the heart."

2. British Quarterly Review, op. cit., pp. 151-2. Tulloch criticizes Cousin's Idealistic proclivity in Theism, pp. 324-27. He characterizes the Hegelianism of the "Young Germany" school as pantheistic, and for that reason ultimately "destitute of all moral meaning and power": pp. 427-31. Cf. also, Theism, pp. 69-70.

In what has been shown so far, it is probably apparent that Tulloch's notion of "moral intuition" is broadly conceived, and on all sides refuses to be limited to the sphere of the merely ethical. Moral consciousness is the means of a direct insight into the ultimate constitution of things, and is itself a manifestation of reason. It is now possible to show how this equation affects the remainder of Tulloch's theistic doctrine, with special reference to the polemic against Naturalism.

(B) The problem posed by Naturalism for theistic belief had been well summed-up by Hume in the celebrated question, "What peculiar privilege has this little agitation of the brain which we call thought that we must ... make it the model of the whole universe?" Translated into Tulloch's phrasing, what "right" has mind to "stand at the head of nature?" To those who were determined to maintain the interests of science, and yet were profoundly sympathetic to the requirements of man's moral and spiritual being, the question seemed to raise irresolvable difficulties. Reason appears to demand the consistent application of the causal principle to every datum of experience--the explanation of them as effects of antecedent causes within a unified system of cause and effect. Spirit, however, must have some element of freedom, or inner power of self-determination not governed absolutely by an external antecedent, if it is to be spirit. The apparent impossibility of reconciling the two views led to aesthetic, theological, and philosophic constructions which did not profess to achieve a reconciliation. Scientific reason must be left alone to tend where it will, though in all probability it must move in the direction of a thoroughly mechanistic view, excluding theism. Beside it, however, stand the facts of moral consciousness, disclosing an order of being in which the "privilege" of thought, the "right" of mind, have their peculiar locus and ascendency over Nature.

Dichotomy is the last word. To a limited extent, this dichotomy was present in Chalmers' separation of rational and moral powers. It was clearly present in the philosophy of Sir William Hamilton, and in the more celebrated Critical doctrines of Kant. With Hamilton and Kant primarily, Tulloch takes issue. He urges that the moral insight is all-comprehending; it must be conclusive for reason, if only because reason, intellect, conscience, conation, --all are in the same case. They are aspects of personality which is unitary and indissoluble. At the center of rational consciousness, dichotomy is intolerable and impossible.

Rational consciousness is a whole--an organic whole, and its distinguishable functions for that reason cannot be compartmentalized or isolated from one another. "According to the only genuine conception of the human mind, ... there are none of the sides of mental activity which can be strictly demarcated from the others, all blending as they do endlessly into one another."[1] That any adequate concept of human nature must consider man "in his totality" is a further insight discovered among the thoughts of Pascal with which Tulloch's own convictions fully accord. Conscience and intellect, for example, may be variously occupied, each with its proper concerns, but both are united within the all-comprehending oneness of personality. In direct consequence, Tulloch rejects the Kantian and Hamiltonian view that moral consciousness only, not intellect, can obtain rationally valid evidence for belief in God. "We cannot legitimately disjoin the intellectual and the moral--the pure and the practical--and hold their deliverances asunder."[2]

> In so far as such views merely imply that to the region of moral consciousness must be traced the foundation of the theistic argument, and its peculiar seat, we are prepared to coincide with them. But we cannot assent to any view which would limit the evidence to

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1. Theism, p. 320. Cf. also, pp. 43, 45.
2. Ibid., p. 324.

> this region. It finds here its peculiar home; but it by no means stops here. Springing from the depths of our moral consciousness, it is taken up by the intellectual common sense; and the special argument from design is neither more nor less than the application which is thus made of the primary theistic principle.[1]

That is to say, the fact of freedom, or free will, at the center of human personality is of decisive importance in deciding the theoretical problems confronting the inquiring intellect. Isolation of the one from the other must falsify truth because it falsely treats consciousness as a house divided against itself. Free will is nothing if it is not consonent with reason, and reason is irrational when it disregards its alternative aspect as freedom.

> We know nothing of Will apart from Reason; the one is to us merely the peculiarly active, the other the peculiarly intelligent, side of the same spiritual energy. They unite and form one in what we comprehensively call Mind, which we therefore recognize as the only adequate source and explanation of the universe.[2]

When Tulloch speaks of mind, consequently, it is mind clothed with the attributes of rational self-determination. It is this mind that must raise questions concerning an ultimate reality of which it is a part. It is this mind that must determine what "explanation" of reality is valid and true.

This, of course, is the task of philosophic demonstration. And once again, the use to which Tulloch puts the "theistic proofs" reveals the vital center of his argument. His view of a valid theistic proof discloses the basic premises of his position. Two thirds of the Theism are given over to the discussion of foundations in logic and "metalogic," and to the illustration of the argument from the various branches of contemporary science. He describes his scheme of proof as "generally called 'Inductive,'" although its critical consideration,—its major premise—is not susceptible of inductive treatment. For simplicity and precision, Tulloch formulates his general

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1. Ibid., p. 291.
2. Ibid., p. 45.

thesis syllogistically:

Order universally proves Mind.
. The Works of Nature discover Order.
. . The Works of Nature prove Mind.[1]

The complex major premise is, of course, the crux of the matter. No one, and least of all a proponent of the Naturalistic view, would seriously dispute the achievement of the sciences in showing what regularities and patterns of events undoubtedly characterize the present constitution of nature. What is denied is that natural order must be regarded as the evidence, and the practical equivalent, of design. Tulloch accepts the obligation to show that "Mind is everywhere the only valid explanation of order—its necessary correlate."[2] That is to say, he would "prove" that mind is the "only valid explanation" of order because it alone answers fully to the notion of a "cause;" it is everywhere the "necessary correlate" of order, because this is implied in the very fact of its rational employment. Thus, the proof of the major premise involves Tulloch in two distinguishable lines of argument, the one having to do with the doctrine of "efficient causation," the other with the doctrine of "final causation." This complication seems to give promise of involved argument, but closer examination shows that the clue to its meaning is to be found in the exact correspondence of the characteristics of mind, or reason, to those already considered in a moral context. Reason, or mind in its intellectual activity, possesses an "authority" comparable to that of moral consciousness. It is in itself a pledge that reality is rational throughout, even as conscience is a pledge that reality is moral throughout. The doctrine of "efficient causation" would prove the efficiency of mind in relation to natural order, and conversely

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1. Ibid., p. 14.
2. Ibid., p. 16.

the witness of natural order to the causation of mind. The doctrine of "final causation" would prove that the claim of reason to survey the whole of reality is rooted in the intuition of an infinite Mind, whose designs pervade the cosmos. Without following Tulloch into too great detail, his treatment of the two inter-related doctrines may be indicated.

To show that "order universally proves mind," Tulloch would first prove that the notion of "causation" regarded as indispensible by all contemporary philosophy must be traced genetically to the power of rational self-determination possessed by mind, apart from which it has no meaning. He argues specifically against the naturalistic "law of universal causation" enunciated by John Stuart Mill. Mill had insisted that the term "cause" be used only to designate an antecedent which is followed regularly and predictably by a recognized consequent. Causation lies simply in the fact of invariable sequence. And the task of philosophy is to prove that the whole of reality may be brought within a unified and comprehensive system, of which "causation" thus understood is the organizing principle. Tulloch is not concerned to contradict the positive but limited truth in this view, but would urge the necessity of supplementing it. The senses yield nothing more than the experience of regular sequences, as Mill asserts. Nature may therefore be regarded as an order of merely mechanical sequences—and this is the sense in which Tulloch himself uses the term most regularly. But a sequence is not in itself sufficient to define a "cause." Reid had pointed out that day follows night, and night day, with unexceptionable constancy, yet the one is never regarded as the "cause" of the other. Mill's rider that, to be an instance of causation, the observed sequence must be "unconditional"—that is, not dependent upon a more inclusive "constitution" of things—can mean anything or nothing. It adds to the mere observation of sequence a belief

in a universal regularity which has no justification whatsoever upon empiricist principles, and thus indirectly refutes its own pretensions.[1] Whence, then, does the notion of "causation" arise? Tulloch concludes that if it does not come "from without," it must come "from within," from a "relation of power" by which consciousness itself is set over against nature, from the primal experience of self-determination, from the knowledge of inner freedom.

> What is commonly called the Will, therefore, is...the ultimate source or fountain of the notion of causation. We apprehend ourselves as agents, and in this apprehension we have already in the fullest sense, the idea of cause. Had we not this apprehension, it seems impossible that we could have ever risen above sequence, as the obvious fact given us in outward observation. With this apprehension lying at the very root of our being, and constituting it essentially, it is equally impossible that we can hold by that fact as furnishing the exhaustive conception of the Universe. According to the radical and imperative character of our mental constitution, we must recognize a deeper life than mere sequence, however grand and orderly, in the phenomena of nature; and this deeper life is just what we mean by a cause.[2]

Whatever the merits of the particular arguments Tulloch brings to the proof, the conclusiveness of his doctrine of causation depends ultimately upon one's ability to accept the axiom of Freedom as he conceives it—"the theistic fact around which, as their rational nucleus, all the others gather."

The doctrine of "final causation" completes the validation of the major premise, "Order universally proves Mind." Tulloch argues at length

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1. Cf. Theism, pp. 27-33. Also Mill's Logic, 3rd edition (London, 1872) Vol. I, pp. 390-1. Tulloch had a high regard for Mill's logical ability, and his contributions to scientific method. He had shown the inadequacy of earlier scientific theory—amply illustrated in Reid and Chalmers,—which recognized the paramount importance of induction and failed to see the necessity of subsequent deduction and verification. Mill also worked out the "four canons of inductive method." These and other contributions were to modify Robert Flint's development of a scientific theism.

2. Theism, p. 36; also pp. 35, 43, & 45.

that a conviction of all-pervasive design is involved in the constitution of rational consciousness. "We can no more, in fact, help making Mind objective, and apprehending it as the only ultimate cause or explanation of things, than we can help recognizing existence under the forms of our mental constitution at all. The one is simply the carrying out of the other."[1] The "ultimacy" of mind--its right to stand at the head of nature--is a rational necessity arising from within. It is, like the imperatives of conscience, an intuition of the Divine Presence, a direct apprehension of God, whose wisdom is commensurate with His power, and His power with His absolute right. Tulloch maintains that God is Himself, in His infinite personal reality, what Reid might call the First Principle of all necessary metaphysical truths.

> This infinite Presence in space and in time is the complement of man's spiritual being at all points. It asserts its power in the human mind in manifold ways, that can only be accounted for by its truth. Apart from its shadow in the intellect, science could not exist: knowledge would be a mere perplexed and confused accumulation. This, however, brings unity into all our mental operations. Reason descries an infinite meaning everywhere, and science is the creation of such a gift. Apart from this reality in the heart, life would be vanity. The higher glory of eternity could not encompass and strengthen it. It is only the truth of the Infinite that gives significance to speculation or perseverance to well-doing.[2]

The Infinite Presence is a personal Presence, which man is enabled to perceive in and through the exercise of his own personal being. Personality is the key to the universe of meaning, and declares for theism as the highest philosophy--the only consistent and comprehensive philosophy.

Tulloch's answer to the inevitable objection that this is arrant anthropomorphism is simply to reaffirm that the issue between Naturalism

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1. Ibid., pp. 62-3.

2. Ibid., p. 327; cf. pp. 63-70. A similar view is expressed by Tulloch's contemporary, Campbell Fraser. Cf. his Essays in Philosophy (Edinburgh, 1856), pp. 246-7.

and Theism turns upon the acceptance or rejection of the postulate that man is endowed with a rational freedom that involves a spiritual order; and the spiritual order is orderly and conceivable only under the sovereign aegis of an infinite Spirit. A demonstration of these postulates is as impossible as it is meaningless. They are simply ultimate facts, or rather aspects of the ultimate fact that the distinctive life of man is possible only in personal relation to God. It is a datum "anterior to all demonstration, and even the very condition of that logical thought, which in vain seeks to reach it."[1] The a posteriori reasonings that are possible in accordance with the theistic syllogism do not establish the reality of God, but only confirm it. Infinite Spirit is known, if at all, only by a direct intuition. By this cognitive act of personality,

> ...the great truth of the existence of God is only preserved as a truth of religion, encompassed with a radiance of evidence which only the willfully blind can fail to see, yet not mathematically demonstrated, that they who devoutly seek the light may have gladness in its discovery.[2]

An "a priori intuition"—seen however indistinctly—is therefore the precondition of any a posteriori proof. Its object is God.

Stated most succinctly, Tulloch's case against Naturalism comes to this: to the mind of man, constituted as it is, "Order universally proves Mind." Before turning to the matter of estimating Tulloch's place in the development of theist doctrine in Scotland, it must be asked what attributes are to be ascribed to the Mind that is everywhere the "necessary correlate" of order? What of God is known without benefit of a specific historical tradition such as that stemming from Jesus Christ? This question is brought

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1. Ibid., p. 336.
2. Ibid., p. 336. Tulloch alternatively uses the terms "belief" and "faith" to designate the intuition of God, for the reason here made plain. Knowledge of God and the right exercise of personality through the agency of will mutually condition one another, within the unity of spirit.

to Tulloch's writings with greater difficulty than it was to Chalmers', because the sharp distinction between a "natural" and "revealed" knowledge of God is no longer precise. According to Tulloch, the knowledge of God accessible to every human spirit is not a mere probability, but a real knowledge of the real God. That is, it is knowledge of God in His Moral Perfection and in His Infinity. His sovereign Righteousness and Goodness are disclosed intuitively to the conscience of good and just men, though they are not necessarily recognized as being of God.[1] His Infinity is apprehended by human reason in full and strenuous exercise.

> In natural theology this predicate of the Infinite is at once the most consummate and comprehensive that rewards our inquiry, without which every induction must come short of the proof of a Divine Existence. It gives, as its essential contents, not only all those special attributes of eternity, omnipotence, omniscience, of which it is simply the generic expression; but, moreover, the unity of these attributes, in which the idea of God alone completes itself. For unity is plainly a logical condition of infinity.[2]

It is this God, or this kind of God, who is to be known by the proper recognition and use of human reason. But, it must again be added, it is a knowledge of God commensurate with human finitude and freedom.

The intuitive knowledge of God, while real knowledge of the real God, has definite limitations, and is not such as logically to exclude the need for a special and direct Self-disclosure like Christian revelation claims to be. On the one hand, it is a knowledge of "apprehension" and not "comprehension"--as Tulloch puts it, appropriate to man as man, and

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1. Tulloch observes suggestively in a sermon: "Virtues can never be splendid vices. So far as they are real, they are always good, and not evil. They are really of God, although there may seem no traces of their roots in Him." (Some Facts of Religion and Life: Edinburgh & London, 1877; p. 199.) Tulloch's sermons, while generally expository, incorporate many academic and theistic conclusions.
2. Theism, pp. 327-8.
3. Ibid., p. 69F; also, cf. supra, p.

not to be confused with God's omniscient and absolute Self-knowledge. There is room for a larger knowledge of Him—from whatever source. On the other, it is knowledge that is hedged about by an irrationality that defies the powers of human reason. The most perplexing limitation of theistic truth is the fact of evil in God's world, which is at bottom, according to Tulloch, the fact of sin. The problem of evil becomes acute only at the level of moral consciousness, where the whole personality of man is found capable of standing in direct contradiction to the Being and purposes of God. The reality of this contradiction introduces an element of radical incomprehensibility into the spiritual order.

> Sin...is in its essential conception the revolt of the human self against the Divine. Whereas the good consists for us in the harmony of the Divine and the human will, the evil consists essentially in the insurrection of the latter against the former. The soul passes out of the sphere of Divine conformity, and asserts itself in an attitude of opposition to God and to goodness. This is the most radical principle of moral evil.[1]

As the express contradiction of God's sovereign will, sin can have no rational explanation whatever. Apart from the negative consideration that the possibility of wrong choices is implied in the gift of moral responsibility, sin makes an all-comprehending philosophy impossible because it presents an irrational element within the spiritual order, a completely incomprehensible surd.[2] But then, what is required is not a rational explanation of the circumstance, but a moral power that can rectify it, and in a practical way point to a restored order uniting spirit with sovereign Spirit. Tulloch does not attempt to conceal his own conviction that such moral power is to be found preeminently in the Christian Gospel. Christ has come into the sphere of moral disorder with supernatural power to

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1. Ibid., p. 386.
2. Cf. Ibid., pp. 386-7.

reestablish the intended harmony between man and God. What is required of religion is not a body of explanatory principles, giving answers to merely theoretical questions, but an effective resolution of the conflict between sinful men and the righteous God. The Gospel, through the faith, worship, and theology, that clothe it, reveals a gracious God, who in Christ makes available to sinful men "a Divine power of moral elevation and consolation."[1] In this teaching, there is much to recall Halyburton's doctrines of sin and of revelation. It is needless to say, of course, that it represents an authentic strain of New Testament teaching.

To the mind of man, constituted as it is, "Order universally proves Mind." That which everyone is able to know of God by virtue of being human is a "direct expression of Divine Revelation" to Reason, and is the ground of man's essential spirituality and rationality. Theistic philosophy is therefore the "complement" of all human studies, including the natural sciences, for unlike Naturalism, it gives due place to mind, or spirit, in constructing a rational account of reality. The theist, according to Tulloch, will allow science to deal with nature on its own terms: he will impose no theoretical or methodological limitation upon the pursuit of knowledge in any sphere. He will only insist that, of importance fully equal to the facts established by the sciences is the fact that a rational spirit sets out in the first place to obtain scientific knowledge. In this light, the conviction that the sum of things is orderly, meaningful, and also valuable, must betoken the infinite wisdom and goodness of God.

(C) It now remains to indicate what development Tulloch's religious philosophy represents in the course of demonstrative theism in Scotland. His liberalism and refreshing openness to widely divergent strains of historical

1. On Tulloch's view of the relation of theistic intuition to Christian faith, cf. Theism, pp. 396-423.

doctrine are certainly new when seen against the background of earlier Scottish thought. But the novelty is not so great as to amount to the abandonment of all that characterized the older natural theology. Closer scrutiny shows that Tulloch extends its characteristic anthropocentrism and mediating position. In disentangling natural theology from naturalism, he would go so far as to say that theistic discussion is wholly dependent upon the fact of "freedom," "spirit," "personality," in man. The "image of God" in man "demonstrates" the reality of God to any who will carefully consider what his inner life implies. Self-knowledge is the preface to knowledge of the Divine. God must be known within the immost sanctuary of subjective consciousness before His presence and purposes may be recognized in Nature. To refute Naturalism, therefore, it is necessary first to refute the Naturalistic view of man. "Blot out the Divine in man," Tulloch remarks suggestively, "and no Divine can be found in Nature. Soul and God are essentially co-relative, and if soul is denied, God, or a Creative Mind, can nowhere be found."[1] The aphorism, Nullus spiritus in Microcosmo, nullus Deus in Macrocosmo, is a succinct and accurate paraphrase of Tulloch's argument. The rational correlation of the human and the Divine is significant; so also is the order of precedence of the two phrases.

It should be plain that the thought conveyed by these statements is radically new so far as the tradition of Scottish theology is concerned. Tulloch's position makes large concessions to a humanistic way of thinking in no way countenanced by the Confessionalist view of man, and hardly consistent with a thorough-going Naturalism--nevertheless, a humanistic ground midway between an anthropocentric natural theology on one side and the general position of Mill, the radical empiricists, Comte, and the Positivists

1. Movements of Religious Thought, p. 242.

on the other--few of whom were content with a thoroughly consistent Naturalism. It was, of course, a ground exploited variously by the Romantics, who as often as not had little concern with philosophical reconciliations, and did not attempt to argue in defense of the extreme subjectivity they cultivated. Tulloch's theism, surrounded by a somewhat confused environment of thought, reflects its diverse tendencies, yet without losing entirely its rootage in Scottish theological traditions.

Something has already been said as to Tulloch's affinities with Reid and Chalmers, and also of his criticism of their conclusions. The tendency toward "inwardness" is intensified. The authority attached by Chalmers to the deliverances of conscience is attributed to the whole of rational consciousness, to human personality in the unity and diversity of its functions. Reid's free-will principle is taken up once more as the necessary presupposition of ethical reality and theistic belief. The "mediating" position inseparable from Common Sense is maintained in the face of new "gnosticism" cultivated under the influence of German Idealism. The propriety, not to say the necessity, of receiving Christian revelation is affirmed. All in all, persistent Common Sense characteristics are apparent throughout Tulloch's systematic and critical presentation of theistic argument. If the Infinite Presence is demonstrated at all, it is by means of evidence resident in human nature. Quite significantly, however, Tulloch is not fond of the term "human nature," and uses it sparingly. The reason is, of course, the insistence that man is more than natural--that his mind, reason, spirit, is in itself supra-natural, and has its being in an order of reality that is centered in God. Strictly speaking, human nature is that part of man's physical and psychical make-up which may be "explained" by

"laws," or traced to regular "causes." Nature and spirit meet in the constitution of man, but spirit asserts its independence of, and right to control, nature.

In holding that spirit enjoys freedom and sovereign rights as against nature, in drawing a sharp contrast between the one and the other, Tulloch reproduces at the heart of his theistic philosophy the fundamental division separating the convictions of his contemporaries—the cleavage, broadly speaking, between Naturalism and Romanticism. It is of first importance, of course, that he tries to work out some kind of reconciliation by which opposing conceptions are not only juxtaposed, but the one is shown to dominate the other. Still, the fact remains that for Tulloch, knowledge of the spiritual order is distinct from knowledge of the natural order. While sense perception is the source of the latter, intuition is a distinct function by which the rational mind apprehends spiritual and "supersensible" reality. Consequently, while Reid and Chalmers taught that knowledge of God apart from revelation is by inference from empirical data, Tulloch holds that it is by direct spiritual perception. In this, there is a certain element of mysticism, no doubt, although in none of his writings does Tulloch give the impression of possessing a predominantly mystical frame of mind. The intuition of the Infinite Presence, even when unrecognized for what it is, still is presupposed by every characteristic function of the human mind, and comes nearest the surface of full consciousness in the moral exercise of personality. For this reason, Carlyle's term "natural supernaturalism" might well be applied to Tulloch's theistic philosophy.

Something has been said of those outside the Scottish tradition who influenced Tulloch's thought on the important matter of intuition. Two

in particular—Blaise Pascal and S. T. Coleridge—are frequently referred to in Theism and the critical writings, either or both of whom could well be given credit for suggesting a doctrine of intuition. It is not entirely strange that these incomparable minds should have attracted one surrounded by the influences of Scottish thought. Pascal's Biblically-centered Pensées, his distaste for rationalism, his sense of the ultimate dependence of religion upon moral commitment, and above all his conviction that the intuitions of the "heart" must be recognized "underlying and forming the conditions of every process of the logical faculty,"[1]—these characteristics seem to have brought to light latent affinites in the Scottish mind. Tulloch's appreciative studies express the high esteem in which Pascal was held in Scotland.[2] That Coleridge's thought should be coupled with that of the great French Jansenist is readily intelligible. He was a careful reader of Pascal, and in so far as his own religious speculations incorporate much direct and indirect light from the Pensées, it is clear why the two should be linked together in Tulloch's estimation, and cited alternately in support of views common to both. Yet, in the last analysis, Coleridge's influence predominates: Tulloch's doctrine of intuition is closer to the teaching of the Romantic philosopher. Coleridge is more confident of the "immediacy" and the self-evidencing rationality of the intuitive power than Pascal—who interpreted more closely the Hebrew-Christian notion of "faith." Tulloch also lays stronger emphasis upon the "greatness" of man in the strength of his rational powers, than upon his "wretchedness" in consequence of willful rebellion against God. Moreover, he does not ponder seriously the problem that had loomed large in

1. British Quarterly Review, op. cit., p. 153.

2. Tulloch's contemporary, Alexander Campbell Fraser, was profoundly influenced by Pascal. Fraser's Philosophy of Theism (the Gifford Lectures for 1894-6), a precise and influential statement of a position strikingly similar to Tulloch's, acknowledges frequently a similar debt to Pascal.

Confessionalist theology, whether the knowledge of intuitive reason may not be distorted as a result of sinful rebellion, and radically false to the extent that it is perverse and morally myopic.[1] With Coleridge, Tulloch shares the conviction that a "just and adequate Philosophy of Religion" can be constructed which will claim the assent of all who consider seriously the implications of human spirituality, and will establish the eminent rationality of Christian revelation. This conviction undoubtedly led him, as it had Coleridge, back to men of like persuasion two centuries earlier, and resulted in a penetrating study of Rational Theology and Christian Philosophy in England in the Eighteenth Century—a work whose solid merit must still be admired. At the same time, Pascal's reluctance to construct anything like a systematic philosophy, and also his decided preference for Christian apologetic, seem to have escaped Tulloch's critical powers completely. Coleridge's thought undoubtedly was more in harmony with the liberal temper of the nineteenth century than the great French Jansenist. Whether it was as close to the Calvinistic and Augustinian foundations of the Scottish theological tradition will perhaps be doubted.

Once the inner, spiritual, and essentially subjective grounds of theistic belief have been "demonstrated," however, Tulloch is not content to stop where Coleridge had stopped. Here there is final evidence that the influence of the older Scottish natural theology has not been left behind entirely. Coleridge saw no meaning whatsoever in the discussion of the traditional proofs, and simply abandoned them to the limbo of all things pointless and confusing. Tulloch is no less critical of any attempt to

1. Studies in The Christian Doctrine of Sin seem not to have modified his view in the least, for the later critical works—represented in the quotations cited above (supra, pp. 133, 136ff)—state the position of Theism with even greater confidence in the clear manifestation of God through His image in man.

"prove" God by induction from data systematically held at arms' length from inner consciousness. This has been sufficiently shown. Yet, his view of the a posteriori proofs is more conciliatory. The perennial strength of Naturalism is interpreted as concrete evidence of the claims nature holds over human imagination. The systematic objectivity of science, while not in any sense equivalent to Naturalism, is to be recognized as the only legitimate method of dealing with a nature against which the human spirit must constantly assert its freedom in order to realize itself. This being so, no philosophy of religion can be comprehensively true if it does not seek to show how nature and spirit are to be reconciled in thought. It is precisely this reconciliation that is the legitimate aim of the "proofs." Hence, Tulloch's theistic syllogism, whose major premise takes as its clue that reconciliation of nature and spirit that is actual within the unity of human life. In man, spirit and nature meet--but on spirit's terms. The proofs merely show, point out, demonstrate, that nature is illuminated only by rationally self-determining spirit. "The soul is infinitely higher than all nature, and validly, therefore, brings all nature within its sphere, and finds its own reflection everywhere in it. Matter is only glorified in the light of Spirit. Nature is only beautiful--only, in fact, intelligible --in the mirror of EVERLIVING MIND."[1]

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1. Theism, p. 72.

CHAPTER V

HISTORY AS NATURAL THEOLOGY: THE THEISM OF ROBERT FLINT

Natural theology in Scotland, anthropocentric from the beginning, considering its problem as one primarily concerning man rather than the non-human order of nature, was perhaps inevitably thrown back upon history. Hume's switch from philosophy to historical study—the observation of man clothed with time and circumstance—was not, as some have thought, a retreat from high intellectual aspiration, but a consistent consequence of the Treatise of Human Nature. Similarly, the tendency to confirm or refute propositions of concern to the natural theologian by measuring their truth against the historical evidence is clearly traceable in Scottish thinking, even from the time of Halyburton. Only in Tulloch's age, however, did it come to full self-consciousness in the form of a persistent method. Yet even in Tulloch's theistic anthropocentrism, a critical presupposition common to Halyburton, Reid, and Chalmers is essentially unchanged: that is, beneath all the vagaries and "accidents" of history, amid the infinite variety of personal idiosyncrasy, Man is substantially the same. The concept of "human nature," from its inception among the ancient Stoics, monumentalized the assumption that in every age and circumstance, "a man's a Man, for a' that." Even Hume, who attacked with vigor the rationalistic "idea" of the substantial self—which owed a great deal to the Stoics—had no intention

of dismissing the term "human nature." Had he been the consistent sceptic he is usually pictured as being, it is difficult to see why he did not. Yet it was he who most accurately described the assumption prevailing down to the time of Tulloch:

> It is universally acknowledged that there is a great uniformity among the actions of men, in all nations and ages, and that human nature remains still the same, in its principles and operations.... Would you know the sentiments, inclinations, and course of life of the Greeks and Romans? Study well the temper and actions of the French and English: you cannot be much mistaken in transferring to the former most of the observations which you have made with regard to the latter. Mankind are so much the same, in all times and places, that history informs us of nothing new or strange in this particular. Its chief use is only to discover the constant and universal principles of human nature, by showing men in all varieties of circumstances and situations, and furnishing us with materials from which we may form our observations and become acquainted with the regular springs of human action and behavior.[1]

This was in fact the use to which he put history in the Natural History of Religion. So also, it was the use to which Tulloch put history and historical opinions, laboring among a great diversity of doctrine to vindicate the theistic view as he saw it. Yet, in Tulloch's life-time, a remarkable change took place which is duly noted in his later writings, but which had no such profound effect upon his thinking as on that of his younger contemporary, Robert Flint.[2] The change may be designated as the gradual triumph of the view that Man not only lives amidst historical change, but is himself subject to that change; and in so far as the change has a discernible direction, affecting man's most essential being, human nature is said to develop historically. Robert Flint began his academic career as a student of the "philosophy of history"--a discipline intimately

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1. Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding, Section VIII, Part I, p.

2. Tulloch was born in 1823 and died in 1886; Flint lived from 1838 to 1910.--Tulloch uses the terms "historical development" and "evolution" frequently in Modern Theories and Movements of Religious Thought.

associated with the idea that a continuous growth and direction are evident in the story of man through the ages. Flint's own conclusions as to the character of this growth and direction are of decisive importance in determining his later conclusions as to the possibility of a natural theology. He is a worthy representative of the next decisive stage in the course of demonstrative theism in Scotland.

Robert Flint stood in the forefront of European scholarship during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. His reputation as a student of the philosophy of history and of theistic philosophy extended far beyond the borders of Scotland. Several of his works were translated into French and Italian--a tribute, surely, to the exceptional ability and broad erudition for which he was well known in his own land.[1] He was a scholar, addressing himself primarily to a scholarly audience, though not without ability on occasion to state his conclusions with remarkable simplicity.[2] The manner in which he conceived his theological task was not of a sort, however, that lends itself to easily comprehensible "popularizations." While Flint may easily be said to agree with his predecessors that natural theology is possible, and its end is a "proof" that "God is, and is a rewarder of them that seek Him," his conception of what would constitute adequate proof is staggering:

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1. Tributes to Flint's ability as scholar and theologian have been collected in Donald Macmillan's biography, The Life of Robert Flint, D.D., LL.D. (London, 1914): cf. pp. 240-1, 308-10, 348-9. This book with its supplementary contributions by students and associates of Flint, provides invaluable material for an appraisal of the man and his work.

2. Theism and Anti-Theistic Theories were published in the lecture-form given them when delivered as the Baird Lectures of 1876 and 1877, but are provided with exhaustive appendices which carry much of the weight of Flint's argument. The Agnosticism of 1903 is more representative of his powers, being a thorough revision of his Croall Lectures for 1887 in accordance with his own exacting standards of scholarship.

> ... the evidences or proofs of God's existence are countless. They are to be found in all the forces, laws, and arrangements of nature--in every material object, every organism, every intellect and heart. At the same time, they concur and coalesce into a single all-comprehensive argument, which is just the sum of indications of God given by the physical universe, the minds of men, and human history. Nothing short of that is the full proof.[1]

A more comprehensive proof could hardly be imagined. Flint recognized that its perfect realization is beyond possibility. What is significant in this conception of the task is the intention of arriving at a "single, all-comprehensive argument" that will synthesize the evidence gleaned from "the physical universe, the minds of men, and human history." A comprehensive argument in this sense could only be realized by a large grasp of the most diverse kinds of knowledge. Few could match Flint's almost encyclopedic range. But the possibility of this range is surely dependent upon the prior conviction that the sheer mass of evidence is comprehensible, and capable of an intelligible organization: this is the universally recognized condition of rational knowledge. Flint's most significant addition to theistic argument is what he takes to be the rational evidence and meaning of human history.

All of Flint's predecessors may be said to have attempted proofs founded upon "indications" of God-given by the "physical universe" and the "minds of men"--most decisively by the latter. Moreover, they used history to illustrate the universal characteristics of the mind of Man. Flint's intention, however, is an argument that will take in "history" or "historical development" as an added dimension. Man is a creature of history; his knowledge of God, "historical," as is evidenced by every "historical religion." The numerical multiplicity of religions and their diversity of belief are

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1. Theism (8th edition, revised: Edinburgh & London, 1891), pp. 62-3.

data of inevitable concern to anyone who would prove the truth of theistic conviction. Moreover, the relations of historical faiths to the growth and aspirations of mankind must also be taken into account, if only because knowledge of physical nature and human nature have themselves developed historically in societies, the character and quality of whose intellectual aspirations have been affected by historical religion. Flint maintains, therefore, that the historical dimension is of the utmost importance to any serious pursuit of knowledge, and of theistic knowledge above all. "The development of the idea of God and the course of the history of man are so dependent on each other that without a full recognition of the importance of either, the other must be unintelligible."[1]

The most persistent criticism Flint makes of the theistic doctrines of his predecessors is simply that they cannot square with the facts of history and historical development. He specifically rejects, for example, any view maintaining that knowledge of God is "by immediate intuition." This would undoubtedly include Tulloch's. Flint contends that the facts of historical religion do not justify the contention that the soul of man is "united to the objectivity" of God, even as sense is to the objectivity of nature.

> The history of religion, which is what ought to yield the clearest confirmation of the alleged intuition, appears to be from beginning to end a conspicuous contradiction of it. If all men have the spiritual power of directly beholding their Creator—have an immediate vision of God—how happens it that whole nations believe in the most absurd and monstrous gods? that millions of men are ignorant whether there be one god or thousands? that even a people like the Greeks could suppose the highest of their deities to have been born, to have a body, and to have committed the vilest actions?[2]

1. Agnosticism (New York, 1903), p. 420.
2. Theism, p. 82.

What the facts of history indicate is that there has been considerable change, alteration, and development, in man's knowledge of God. An intuitional theory which, like Tulloch's, specifically likens the apprehension of God to the immediate perceptions of physical nature cannot adequately account for such facts.[1]

> A true power of intuition is little susceptible of growth, and its testimonies vary within narrow limits; any development of which it admits is only slightly due to external conditions, and mainly the necessary consequence of internal activity, of inherent expansibility. It is thus, for example, with the senses of sight and hearing, in so far as they are intuitive. But it is manifestly very different with the religious nature.[2]

An adequate proof of God's sovereign existence must give a satisfactory account of man's religious past with its mixture of darkness and light, confusion and order. Confidence in the present state of religious knowledge must be tempered by the facts of its past historical genesis. These are convictions everywhere written large upon Flint's thinking, and are of the greatest importance in estimating the exact character of his conclusions. The interpretation of Flint's encyclopedic argument must take into account the formation of his ideas concerning the character and meaning of history, and specifically the fact that his study of the "philosophy of history" preceded his work in natural theology, and was regarded as an introduction to the later study.[3] Before treating his theistic conclusions in detail, it will be essential to consider pertinent facts of Flint's own intellectual history, and of his connection with current doctrines of "evolution," "development," and "progress," which radically reshaped European thought in the second half of the nineteenth century.

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1. Cf. supra, p. 144, especially footnote 1.
2. Theism, pp. 82-3.
3. Cf. Macmillan, pp. 182-4.

In 1864 Flint was appointed to the Chair of Moral Philosophy at St. Andrews, previously occupied by Thomas Chalmers.[1] It was in fulfillment of the responsibilities of this office that he undertook the study of the Philosophy of History. The relevance of the study is obvious in the light of Flint's notion of Moral Philosophy: "I define it...as the Philosophy of Man's Moral Nature, Moral Relations, and Moral History."[2] Like Tulloch, Flint uses the term "moral" in its widest sense as designating all data arising from, or centering in, the personal life of man, whether individually or in society. For Flint, history and moral phenomena are roughly coextensive. Their interdependence is the most basic conviction brought away from his studies in the philosophy of history.[3] An explicit statement of his personal conclusions in the matter is given in the following appreciation of Charles Renouvier, whose views along with many others Flint causes to pass in review. Renouvier's historical doctrine, he writes,

> ...is one to which, in all its fundamental principles and positions, I assent.... He has shown...the closeness of the connection between history and morality; that neither is intelligible or realisable without the other; that history is an ethical formation and morality an historical production. He has made apparent by critical analysis of the historical process itself that it is in the exercise of rational freedom that societies, as well as individuals, have risen or sunk,

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1. Flint also followed Chalmers in transferring to the Chair of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh, in 1876. His successful candidacy for the Chair of Moral Philosophy in St. Andrews was signalized by the fact that he was appointed over two rivals, one of whom was the distinguished Hegelian T. H. Greene. He thereby became a colleague of Principal Tulloch, whose intimacy he enjoyed, but to whose works he rarely refers.

2. Quoted from his Inaugural Lecture on assuming the chair, in Macmillan, p. 152.

3. The Philosophy of History in Europe, Volume I, appeared in 1874. It had on a second title-page, "The Philosophy of History in France and Germany." Flint's intention was to do an exhaustive work, dealing with the contributions of each of the European countries. The enterprise was interrupted by his transferal to the Chair of Divinity in Edinburgh—as it turned out, permanently. The History of the Philosophy of History, with the subtitle,

> elevated or debased themselves.... He has refuted...those theories which represent history as a mechanically necessitated product, or an inevitable dialectic movement, or a simple organic growth, or the natural consequence of a struggle for existence between individuals and societies, or a fundamental economic evolution. He has proved it to be, on the contrary, an essentially ethical creation, the formation of the world of humanity by free individual wills, always conscious of moral law, while always working in given conditions of time and space, or heredity and solidarity, and always influenced by interests and passions, by physical and spiritual surroundings.[1]

Whatever the merits or validity of this philosophical view of history, the clear correlation of moral and historical reality adds a dimension to Moral Philosophy not previously recognized, by Chalmers for example, Flint's predecessor in the chair by forty years. Nor had Tulloch, for that matter, who had not only made "freedom" or "free will" the primary category of his theistic outlook, but had explicitly recognized the indebtedness of the theologian or philosopher to past history. The reason for the transition from Tulloch to Flint is, of course, that Flint was in a position to assimilate more completely the notions of "evolution," "development," and "progress," the full impact of which was not felt in Britain until the last three decades of the century.[2] While Flint's Philosophy of History repudiates conclusions to which much contemporary thinking along developmental and evolutionary lines had come, it shares with them a common impulse--to show the relevance of these notions to every possible aspect of reality.[3] It is, in fact, to a right understanding of historical development that the philosophical study of history is directed. Flint asserts unequivocally that it is a moral development.

"Historical Philosophy in France and French Belgium and Switzerland," appeared in 1893. It was a revision and expansion of only a part of the earlier work.

1. History of the Philosophy of History (Edinburgh & London, 1893), p. 671.
2. Three works which contributed much to the triumph of "developmental" thinking were published five to ten years after Tulloch's Theism: Darwin's The Origin of Species, in 1859; Herbert Spencer's First Principles, in 1862; and Hutchison Stirling's The Secret of Hegel, in 1865.
3. A considerable stir of British opinion greeted the Origin of Species,

The ideas which he designates as indispensible for a proper understanding of the Philosophy of History are vital not only in that context, but are in fact the presuppositions of his later effort to construct a monumental "system of natural theology." They are three: progress, unity, and freedom. "The growth of history towards a scientific stage has been partly the consequence and partly the cause of the growth" of these ideas, "without a firm and comprehensive grasp of which no philosophical study or conception of history is possible."[1] Flint's phraseology here clearly indicates his intention. He is bent on a scientific knowledge of history. These fundamental ideas, properly defined in relation to the multiplicity of human events, are the principles in accordance with which history is to be ordered to form a rational and meaningful whole. The scientific study of history is "partly the consequence" of these three notions. Historically, they first appeared as undemonstrated beliefs, rooted in

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because, as is generally recognized, the British mind has not been prepared for its somewhat revolutionary principles of evolution and natural selection. The notion of evolution was hailed by Darwin's more enthusiastic British contemporaries as a triumph of pure scientific research: his enormous industry in collecting empirical data and classifying it did much to create that impression. It was not generally recognized that "evolution" had deep historical roots in developmental and progressivist philosophies stemming from Germany, France, and Italy. Flint's work in the Philosophy of History brought him into direct contact with "original sources."—The notion of "natural selection" suggested to Darwin by the population theories of Malthus was responsible for the Naturalistic turn taken by much "evolutionary" thinking. The principle seemed to make easily applicable to morphological, psychological, and social sciences, the same mechanistic principles which had met with considerable success in the physical sciences. As to the philosophical merits of the principle, Lord Balfour has observed, "Though the fact of selection does not make it harder to believe in design, it makes it easier to believe in accident." (Theism and Humanism, p. 35.)

1. The Philosophy of History in Europe, p. 27. In this work, only the ideas of "progress" and "unity" are treated at length. "Freedom" is fully discussed in the revised volume, pp. 124-135.

diverse contexts and traditions. Flint provides a cursory history of each of the three notions. That of progress is traced to Hebrew-Christian origins.[1] The conviction that unity binds all human events and all reality into one meaningful whole is recognized as the great contribution of Graeco-Roman culture. The notion of freedom[2] is represented as being the unique contribution of recent thought: Hegel's philosophy of history exemplifies the high importance accorded this "idea" in modern philosophy. In conjunction, these beliefs suggest the possibility of a scientific knowledge of history. Its realization is brought about, however, only when their crudely historical form is reduced to a serviceable precision, when as clearly conceived hypotheses they are systematically refined by being confronted with the raw material of historical fact. It is Flint's conviction that beliefs, which came into being as plausible interpretations of human experience, may be employed as working hypotheses in the same way that the physical scientist would crudely formulate, then test, and gradually refine a hypothesis describing the "behavior" of matter. So it is that the scientific study of history is not only a "consequence" of the three leading ideas, but is also "partly the cause" of their development. In being systematically refined against the actualities of history, they approach

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1. Canvassing Oriental and Graeco-Roman cultures, Flint finds occasional notices of belief in the meaningful development of history, but no clear conviction that is not overshadowed by cyclical, determinist, and pessimistic views. The Christian doctrine of Providence, supplemented by the Renaissance recognition of human agency, is accorded final responsibility for originating the notion of "progress." Cf. History of the Philosophy of History, pp. 88-103. For history of the idea of "unity," cf. pp. 104-123; of the idea of "freedom," pp. 124-135.

2. "Freedom" is defined as "a state in which humanity fully realises all its powers, or, in other words, a state in which there are no other limits to the exercise of its powers than the very conditions of their complete and proper exercise,--the laws of nature, rationality, and morality." Ibid., p. 126.

more and more to the ideal of demonstrated knowledge. To read Flint's studies in the Philosophy of History is to come face to face with the conviction that intellectual and moral progress, growth toward a comprehensive unity of human life and thought, and the slow realization of human freedom are the inherent "laws" of history. If not completely demonstrated, they are yet accepted as the rules of tendency resulting from centuries of moral struggle and spiritual aspiration.

These comprehensive "ideas" have direct bearing upon Flint's conception of natural theology, and can be shown to modify theistic argument in important ways. This in itself is an obvious increment of theistic doctrine in Scotland derived chiefly from external influence. But an even more significant development is the method by which Flint would bring historical beliefs--and in particular beliefs concerning moral and spiritual reality--into relation with exact scientific knowledge. The Philosophy of History is to be a demonstrative science whose principles or laws will stand on equal footing with Newton's gravitational principle, or with Darwin's "law" of natural selection. They will have whatever of final validity scientific truths may be said to have. Scientific certainty is Flint's ultimate aim; his proximate goal is to achieve a place for the Philosophy of History in the esteem which his contemporaries accorded not only to the physical, but also to the biological sciences.[1] The high estate of contemporary science is the "touchstone" by which his thinking is measured and regulated. This is plain in such a statement as, "It is chiefly through

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1. That is to say, Flint is thoroughly a representative of the scientific era through which he lived, which Professor Whitehead has somewhere described as an "age of scientific orthodoxy, undisturbed by much thought beyond the conventions." While Flint's critical mind did not acquiesce easily in convenient over-simplifications, he did not escape the limitations imposed by the prevailing temper of the scientific mind.

the growth of physical science that the notion of law in human development has arisen, and chiefly through it also that the path which leads to the discovery of law has been opened up."[1] To this may be added Flint's summary appraisal of the progress made toward the scientific study of history down to his own time:

> That a practical belief in scientific law and method is the distinctive characteristic of the representative historians of the nineteenth century will, I think, be questioned by no competently informed person; and, if acknowledged, I may perhaps have said enough to establish my thesis that historical art has been spontaneously and surely, although slowly, leading up to historical science.[2]

Flint does not say that the detailed study of history, or the comprehensive Philosophy of History, is a science--a body of exact and verified knowledge. He contends only that it is on the way to being such; and that progress toward that end is achieved by a fruitful interdependence between a "practical belief" in its being attained, and the logical methods of verification employed in other sciences already developed to a high degree. The belief and the scientific method are necessarily correlative if progress toward final knowledge of man's moral development in history is to be continuous. Flint does not hesitate to speculate as to what that knowledge will be:

> The ultimate and greatest triumph of historical philosophy will really be neither more nor less than the full proof of providence, the discovery by the processes of scientific method of the divine plan which unites and harmonises the apparent chaos of human actions contained in history into a cosmos.

But this in itself is merely a belief, which only the progress of historical science can transform into knowledge.

It is now possible to show how Flint's studies of the Philosophy

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1. Philosophy of History in Europe, p. 25.
2. Ibid., p. 27.
3. Ibid., p. 22.

of History, undertaken during the St. Andrews' professorship, determined the character of his theistic doctrine. When Flint transferred to the Chair of Divinity at Edinburgh, a new project more in keeping with the duties of his office came into view--a comprehensive System of Natural Theology that would culminate in a conclusive proof that God is as theistic belief depicts Him. This System, work on which prevented his earlier intention of doing an exhaustive study of the "History of the Philosophy of History," was itself never completed. Any final appraisal of Flint's argument must keep in mind that it remains only a torso.[1] As proposed, the completed System would consist of four principal divisions. (1) It would "exhibit what evidence there is for belief in the existence of God."[2] (2) It would undertake to "refute antitheistic theories,--atheism, materialism, positivism, secularism, pessimism, pantheism, and agnosticism." (3) It would then proceed to "delineate the character of God as disclosed by nature, mind, and history, and to show what light the truth thus ascertained casts upon man's duty and destiny." (4) Finally, and as a summation of the entire system, it would "trace the rise and development of the idea of God and the history of theistic speculation." Of this comprehensive and unified plan, only the first and second parts were executed with thoroughness in Flint's Baird and Croall Lectures. The remaining two--which would have been the decisive stages of the argument--are dealt with very imperfectly. An article on "Theism" in the Ninth Edition of the Encyclopedia

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1. Professor Alfred Caldecott, in The Philosophy of Religion in England and America (New York, 1901; p. 122ff) criticized Flint's Theism for being a one-sided and imperfect presentation of theistic argument. In the concluding section of Agnosticism, published somewhat later, Flint replies that the task attempted in Theism was but the first part of a projected four-part System, and must be judged accordingly.

2. This and the following quotations are taken from Agnosticism, p. 640.

Britannica touch upon them in a cursory way, and are some indication as to how he would have concluded the System had he been able to give his Gifford Lectures in 1906-7.[1] Illness prevented him, and he died in 1910. A certain amount of reconstruction is necessary, therefore, in order to approximate Flint's view of the completed argument. By his own express statement, Theism has no more ambitious object than to "exhibit the evidence" for belief in God: that is, bring together the relevant data, from which a comprehensive System may be developed. Anti-Theistic Theories and Agnosticism examine the historical alternatives to theism, with a sharp eye to discern their defects. But the final task of vindicating theistic concepts, definitions, principles, and of synthesizing or systematizing these, was never completed. The all-too-brief encyclopedia article and the work completed on the Philosophy of History must fill in the large gap.[2]

The conspicuous addition of the historical dimension to the theistic argument appears plainly at each of the four stages of Flint's System, and gives a new latitude to the whole. Psychological analysis of the individual consciousness had been the method of earlier Scottish natural theologians, providing them with a view of human nature from which to elaborate the theistic case. Flint's aim is an exhaustive analysis of the historical consciousness--or rather, of the spiritual consciousness of mankind as evidenced in and through the history of the race. It is

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1. It was more than fitting that Flint should have been asked to deliver the Gifford Lectures, for his biographer records that Lord Gifford's original intention was to endow a Chair on Natural Theology for Flint. His refusal to accept it was thus in a way responsible for the founding of the Trust, which annually brings distinguished thinkers to Scottish universities to discuss questions of natural theology. Cf. Macmillan, pp. 426-7.

2. The encyclopedia article is reproduced in Agnosticism, pp. 640-664.

of the highest importance that Flint conceives the fourth and final stage of his System to be the appraisal of results obtained at the previous three stages in the context of historical development. It is the history of the race, the growth of religions, their progress toward the realization of God's moral perfections, the advance of historically conditioned thinking toward a unified religious world-view, and the tendency of the higher faiths to implement the freedom and perfection of the human spirit—it is this all-embracing history that is the foundation and consummation of Flint's theistic argument. Not only so, but the argument itself is a thing of history. It is not the creation of a detached intellect, of a philosopher speculating in isolation from the life and faith of his kind. Nor is theism a philosophy that eschews every connection with historical religious beliefs. While theistic philosophy is not identical with any historic religion, it has no content or reality apart from the beliefs and inferences originating in historic religions.

> The individual man left to himself is very weak. He is strong only when he can avail himself of the strength of many others, of the stores of power accumulated by generations of his predecessors, of the combined forces of a multitude of his contemporaries.... It is...an indisputable historical fact that we owe our theism in great part to our Christianity,—that natural religion has had no real existence prior to or apart from what has claimed to be revealed religion—and that the independence which it now assumes is that of one who has grown ashamed of his origin.[1]

In general, Flint affirms that theistic doctrine is subject to historical development because of increasingly scientific insight into the Providence revealing itself in concrete facts and events, and also because of the involvement of the inquiring mind in history. To put it another way, the content and the rational form of theistic proof both have a historical dimension.

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1. Theism, pp. 20-1.

Moreover, this dimension of religious knowledge is essentially a moral dimension. The development of religious knowledge, like the development of the Philosophy of History, is in its own way coextensive with the moral development of man. This is a belief with which Flint's System begins: it is broadly enunciated in the introductory chapters of Theism. Religion, of which theology is the appropriate science, is defined in a general way as "man's communion...with what he believes to be a god or gods; his sense of relationship to, and dependence on, a higher mysterious agency, with all the thoughts, emotions, and actions which proceed therefrom."[1] Belief in Deity or deities, which on Flint's view constitutes a religion, has an indissoluble connection with human life and conduct, and is to be known by its fruits. He does not hesitate, therefore, to discuss and evaluate religious thought in terms of its moral consequences. He is in entire agreement with Tulloch's teaching that "religion is a pervading element of human nature." It is the response of the whole human spirit to the Divine.

> Religion belongs exclusively to no one part or province, no one disposition or faculty of the soul, but embraces the whole mind, the whole man. Its seat is the centre of human nature, and its circumference is the utmost limit of all the energies and capacities of that nature. At the lowest it has something alike of intellect, affection, and practical obedience in it. At its best, it should include all the highest exercises of reason, all the purest and deepest emotions and affections, and the noblest kind of conduct.[2]

This, however, is a "developed idea" of religion, and one that is intimately connected with theistic belief. Less developed religions are on a lower plane simply because the professed revelations of God which they represent

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1. Ibid., p. 32 Cp. Anti-Theistic Theories (Edinburgh & London, 1885), pp. 258-9.

2. Ibid., pp. 36-7. If due exception be made for Chalmers, this is the prevailing view of Scottish religious psychology from the time of Halyburton (supra, p. 43).

do not make their appeal to the whole man. The degree of development to be attributed to any professed revelation or religious belief is to be measured by the moral development manifest in its disciples—by the resulting efflorescence of their spiritual powers. In this sense, Flint's argument may be said to proceed upon a homo religiosus mensura principle.[1]

> Only a religion which admits of full communion of the reason, affection, and will of the worshipper with the object of his worship—only a religion which presents an object of worship capable of eliciting the entire devotion of the worshipper's nature, and at the same time of ennobling, enlarging, refining, and satisfying that nature—fully realizes the idea of religion, or, in other words, can claim to be a perfect religion.[2]

Polytheistic, pantheistic, and deistic conceptions of God are defective in so far as they fail to do justice to the intellectual, ethical, or emotional requirements of man's moral nature. The theistic idea of God consummates the religious development, because—as Flint contends—the God of theism requires the service of the whole man. "The highest possible form of religion must be a theistic religion—a religion in which the one personal and perfect God is the object of worship."[3] "God, as the presupposition of all elevating ideals, and the object of all ennobling desires, is the primary source and the ultimate explanation of all progress."[4]

Moreover, the problem of relating belief to knowledge, which came into view in connection with Flint's studies in the Philosophy of History, did not become less acute when he turned to the System of Natural Theology. The assumption that belief has a proper and necessary connection with any

1. The "homo mensura principle" is the cardinal notion of Professor Campbell Fraser's Philosophy of Theism. Flint's view differs only in that it keeps more steadily in view the facts of man's religious, as well as his philosophical, history.
2. Theism, pp. 37-8. Constant reference is made to this principle in the criticisms pressed against the anti-theistic theories which Flint examines at the second stage of his comprehensive System. E.G., cf. Anti-Theistic Theories, pp. 19-27, 173, 332-3, 395-409.
3. Theism, p. 50.
4. Ibid., p. 58. Cp. Agnosticism, pp. 573-77, 659-64.

scientific knowledge of reality is latent throughout Flint's exposition of theism; but only in Agnosticism is it treated systematically as a cardinal concern of general, and of religious, epistemology.[1] In its widest sense, "belief" is said to be simply "an assent to judgments of knowledge and existence,"--an assent involving the intellect, but no less the imagination, the feelings, the will, and in fact the whole of human nature. It is the direct, unanalyzed response of man's whole being, affirming that something is and is known, with whatever consequence to himself.[2] But belief may be assent to falsehood, or assent given without accurate perception of its object. "Knowledge," on the other hand, is belief duly analyzed, from which error and falsehood have been systematically eliminated.

> Belief is often--what knowledge never is--a holding for true that which is false, a mistaking for accurate perceptions those which are erroneous, for correct judgments such as are incorrect, and for legitimate processes of reasoning more or less manifest fallacies. Knowledge is always the holding for true what is true; and the true is that which is the expression of external and internal, physical or spiritual, reality, which is valid, not for one mind only, but for all sane minds.[3]

Religious belief is a species of general belief, and knowledge in this sphere is to be reached by analysis of the appropriate beliefs. Belief in God is whatever assent is given to His existence as a result of an immediate and unanalyzed apprehension of His Presence. In any significantly religious form, it is a momentous assent to God's reality, affecting every side of human personality.[4] Yet, as the history of religions bears ample witness, religious belief is subject to grave errors and perversions. Belief in God must therefore be refined in such a way as to become knowledge of God. True beliefs must be vindicated by showing that they conform

1. Cf. Agnosticism, pp. 457-60.
2. I have tried to summarize the thought of pp. 460-78.
3. Ibid., pp. 522-3.
4. Cf. ibid., pp. 486-7.

to evidence. That is to say, Flint holds that religious beliefs are capable of demonstration--in the same way that "beliefs" or "hypotheses" of natural science are demonstrated--by the method of inductive and deductive investigation, by the analysis and synthesis of appropriate evidence.[1] Anyone concerned with religious truth, who recognizes the errors and excesses into which many are betrayed by their beliefs, must welcome the aid of scientific study. The task of religious science is simply to determine whether beliefs conform to properly apprehended and articulated evidence: in other words, whether they conform to the conditions of scientific knowledge.

The transformation of belief in God into an exact and comprehensive knowledge is, according to Flint, the primary characteristic of religious progress. A System of Natural Theology will be adequate to the task of "proving" the sovereign existence of God only if it recognizes the historical conditions which religious thought--and all thought, for that matter--cannot evade. To recognize the primacy of belief is not to abandon the attempt to arrive at a thoroughly rational account of religion, but to give history its due, to see and understand reason concretely embodied in the course and direction of historical development. In Flint's thinking,

1. This point is developed most fully in Flint's article on "Theology," contributed to the Ninth Edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica (Edinburgh, 1888), Vol. XXIII, pp. 260-76. Questions of theological method are discussed in great detail. Theology in all its branches is, ideally, a science, and--along with astronomy, chemistry, biology, history--a department of Philosophy, which Flint regards as the Scientia Scientiarum. (Cf. his last-published work entitled Philosophy as Scientia Scientiarum: Edinburgh & London, 1904.) Theological method is said to be primarily inductive. The terms essential to the science are to be reached by induction from all recognizable manifestations of religion; and when its principles are duly formulated, they must be "proved by a process of apologetic and critical reasoning which is in the main inductive." (Ibid., p. 265.) Flint hazards the remark that Mill's canons of inductive method--agreement, difference, concomitant variation, residues--are as applicable in theological science as in any other. How precisely, or to what extent when experimentation is all but impossible, he does not say.

the Philosophy of History and the System of Natural Theology are fused together, and presuppose one another. This may be indicated in a summary way by the following passage:

> Humanity as a whole has continued steadily in the faith that more is to be known of Deity than has been known at any given time; and that faith has been a continuous source not merely of religious progress but of all progress. The idea of God accepted in the present day as its chief ruling idea is only explicable by the whole religious history of man which has preceded it and the whole religious nature of man which underlies that history.[1]

Natural Theology is simply the scientific treatment of that "whole religious history," without uncritical reliance on the dogmas of any particular religion, and with a view to a final, all-comprehending science, or philosophy. It is to seek a conclusive proof of the Divine Reality by relying entirely upon the inherent rationality of historical development connecting the present state of belief and knowledge with the past. In this sense, Flint regards history itself as a natural theology, and his theological method professes only to unfold its evidence.

It is now possible to look more closely at the argument developed in the parts of the System that were completed, and to indicate significant details that presage what the completed system might have been. The remaining analysis may best be undertaken in four stages. (A) The self-styled "rationalism" underlying Flint's entire System must first be recognized and understood--particularly in view of long-established Scottish opposition to any form of rationalism. Then (B) the precise belief, the religious "hypothesis" to be proved, must be outlined. These considerations are necessarily preliminary to (C) a study of the use Flint makes of the "four proofs" or general lines of proof which "concur and coalesce into a

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1. Agnosticism, p. 576.

single all-comprehensive argument." Finally, (D) it will be possible to indicate Flint's relation to the previous theistic development in Scotland.

(A) In commenting upon Flint's thought, Professor W. P. Paterson has termed it a "rationalistic supernaturalism," and Dr. James Lindsay, a "demonstrative rationalism."[1] This is in keeping with Flint's characterization of himself. "If to hold that belief to be legitimate must be regulated by and conformed to reason is to be a rationalist, undoubtedly I am a rationalist—an unblushing and impenitent rationalist—who considers those who do not thus far agree with him to be irrationalists."[2] Of all Scottish thinkers considered thus far, Flint undoubtedly comes closest to the position taken by Locke and English natural theology in the eighteenth century—the insistence that the bases of religion may and must be demonstrated by reason. Flint's system stands upon the assumption that theistic belief can be proved by reason. It can be proved, but not by argument which depends upon the finality of syllogistic reasoning! The proof Flint has in mind is to be cut to the measure of a very different form of "reason."[3]

What Flint means by the term "reason" and what Locke, Hume, or Kant meant by it are very different matters. As Flint employs the term, it

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1. Cf. Macmillan, pp. 295 & 349. Paterson contributed a chapter on "Flint's Doctrinal System" and Lindsay on "His Contributon to Theism" to Macmillan's biography. Both are helpful and suggestive. The present interpretation of Flint's contribution to Theism will be found to differ from that of Lindsay, who is prone to oversimplify in terms of his own "Progressivist" thesis. (Cp. his Recent Advances In Theistic Philosophy of Religion.)

2. Agnosticism, p. 513.

3. Failure to determine the exact nature of Flint's "rationalism" has been responsible for the very different views taken of his argument. Professor Caldecott criticized Flint's Theism on the score that it is insufficiently confident of the powers of reason: "There is an acquiescence in the possibility that the reasoning power of ordinary minds must not be taken to be adequate to establish Personal Theism as a matter of course." (Op. cit., p. 125.) On the other hand, Professor John Dickie in his Fifty Years of British Theology (Edinburgh, 1932) criticizes Flint's overconfidence in the power of "reason" to prove the theistic belief. (p. 63ff.)

is not pure intellect, disengaged on the one hand from the will, the "passions," and other psychic functions, or on the other from Kant's "sensibility" and the content of knowledge provided by the senses. Rather, in the context of theistic argument it is "reason in the ordinary and popular sense in which we all speak of those who have become insane and morally irresponsible as having 'lost their reason.'"[1] It is the rationally integrated self in its entirety.

> It is not reason divorced from any inherent power or legitimate affection of the human mind, but reason conjoined with them all, with sense, perception, and conception, with intuition, judgment, and inference, with imagination, with appetites and desires, with moral and spiritual susceptibilities and aspirations. It is the entire rational self, regulating all and not dispensing with any of the principles and powers of human nature so far as they can be rationally controlled, made 'subservient to moral purposes," and 'auxiliar to Divine.'[1]

It is reason in Tulloch's sense, in abstraction from nothing that is essential to the whole of human personality. It is by reason, in this sense, that the truth or falsity of religious belief is to be judged. When this doctrine is thus faced squarely, it would seem to be only a more emphatic reaffirmation of the anthropocentric point of view, which has been seen to characterize Scottish thought from the beginning, although in somewhat varied forms. The development has passed from Halyburton's apologetic "problem concerning man" to Hume's sceptical view of human nature, to Reid's mediating argument κατ' ἄνθρωπον, to Chalmers' theology of conscience, to Tulloch's Nullus Spiritus, Nullus Deus, and now to Flint.

> The mental process in virtue of which we have the idea of God comprehends and concentrates all that is most essential in human nature. It is through bearing the image of God that we are alone able to apprehend God. Take any essential feature of that image out of a human soul, and to apprehend God is made thereby impossible to it. All that is divine in us meets, unites,

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1. Agnosticism, p. 514.

> co-operates, to lay hold of what is divine without us. Hence the fuller and clearer the divine image is in any man, the fuller and clearer will be his perception of the divine original.[1]

This passage might have been taken from any of Tulloch's writings. Unlike Tulloch, however, Flint hesitates to allow the theistic argument to be cast in syllogistic form--as though it were sufficiently simple and final to be so represented.[2] Growth of rational powers, either on the intellectual or on the ethical side, and growth in the understanding of these powers carries with it the promise of a larger and more profound apprehension of God's true nature. "The thoughts of men as to God are necessarily enlarged by increase of insight into the conditions of their own thinking."[3] Greater self-knowledge is the key to greater understanding of nature and history, which also makes possible a greater knowledge of God. "The greatness, the power, the wisdom, the goodness of the God of creation and providence must be increasingly apprehended in the measure that nature and its course, humanity and its history, are apprehended; and that measure is given us in the stage of development attained by the sciences."[3] Finally, God's moral, or ethical, perfections are discerned more clearly as man himself increases in moral stature. "The apprehension of God and the sense of moral distinctions and moral obligations condition each other and correspond to each other.... Thus the knowledge of God is conditioned and influenced by the course of man's moral experience."[4] In general, as man increases in rationality, in intellectual and moral stature, his ability to know God must also increase.

(B) What then is the belief, the religious hypothesis, which "reason" in Flint's broad sense must establish? It is that theism, or a

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1. Theism, pp. 68-9; cp. Agnosticism, pp. 514-5.
2. Theism, pp. 71-75; also, Agnosticism, p. 651f.
3. Ibid., p. 661.
4. Ibid., p. 662.

theistic conception of God, provides the only adequate explanation of reality as disclosed in mind, nature, and history. That is, the facts of experience, taken comprehensively, all serve to establish the certainty that "the universe owes its existence, and continuance in existence, to the reason and will of a self-existent Being, who is infinitely powerful, wise, and good."[1] The task of reason in transforming the belief into knowledge is simply to show that the evidence confronting it occasions the theistic belief which, when tested by the inductive and deductive procedures of scientific investigation, is found to fit closely to the facts.

Insisting on the primacy of belief, Flint avoids a great deal of logical wrangling as to whether inference can be validly made--after Reid's or Chalmers' fashion, for example--from man as part and center of the natural order to God who is conceived to be above and outside of it. Theism is a factual belief standing at the end of a long historical development. It is either true or it is false. Man is either confronted by an Infinite Person who has set the marks of creative Wisdom, Power, Goodness upon all His works, or he is not. The belief must simply be measured against the evidence claimed to justify it.

> The proofs of God's existence must be, in fact, simply His own manifestations; the ways in which He makes Himself known; the phenomena on which His power and character are imprinted. They can neither be, properly speaking, our reasonings, nor our analyses of the principles involved in our reasonings. Our reasonings are worth nothing except in so far as they are expositions of God's modes of manifestation; and even when our reasonings are correct, our analyses of them, supposing we attempt to analyse them, may be erroneous.[2]

Belief in a God who is infinitely powerful, wise, and good is belief in an infinite Person who is able to create and sustain in ordered unity the life of man, nature, and history. It is not to be expected, therefore, that the

1. Theism, p. 18.
2. Theism, p. 61.

proof will depend solely upon the logical powers of the finite human reason. The infinite Mind will not be wholly comprehensible to the finite mind, nor will human knowledge of God be absolute, in the sense of knowing what He is "in Himself." Knowledge of infinite Personality must in fact depend primarily upon God's ability to make Himself known to finite creatures. In one of the most illuminating passages in the work on Agnosticism, Flint affirms:

> We are not to assume that we can have an apprehension of God independent of His own manifestation of Himself to us.... Our knowledge of Him is derived from Himself, and hence to know Him shows not so much the power of the finite to reach the Infinite as the power of the Infinite to reach the finite.[1]

That is to say, the argument which is to vindicate the theistic belief concerning God's being and powers cannot begin by ruling out any and every notion of Divine activity underlying the process of religious knowledge--that is, a Self-disclosure from God to men, a revelation by the Supranatural. If there is a God, an infinite Person as theism portrays Him, then revelation is to be expected, and the progress of religious knowledge will depend upon the fact of His disclosing Himself in a way somehow made comprehensible to the finite mind. For this reason Flint holds that a conception of supranatural revelation is not incompatible with the aims of natural theology: it must only be shown to be in accord with the evidence.

The theistic hypothesis is, then, that man apprehends an infinite Being, an infinite Person, from Whom, in Whom, and to Whom, all things have their being--nature, man, and history--Who reveals Himself to the finite reason. But is this belief rational? Can it be known to be true? To vindicate it in detail is the purpose of the four proofs.

(C) Seven of the ten chapters of Theism are devoted to the theistic

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1. Pp. 582-3.

proofs which Flint, following Kant, distinguishes as the "cosmological," the "teleological," the "moral," and the "ontological."[1] But his debt to Kant is terminological only. He dismisses the view that the four proofs are, or can be regarded as, each self-contained and self-sufficient, and that only the moral proof can be said to have any rational validity. Flint insists, to the contrary, that all are valid as far as they go, and that they are mutually interdependent—each contributing to the cumulative argument. They are "but stages in a single rational process," which moves when ordered "naturally" from the cosmological proof, to the teleological, to the moral, and finally to a consummation in the ontological proof.[2] It is probably needless to point out that Flint proceeds upon assumptions very different from Kant's. There is no question of the proofs being "theoretic-dogmatic" demonstrations of Pure Reason. They are intended rather to be a systematic anatomy of the apprehension of God, which, in the unanalyzed form of its appearance in historic religion, is belief. Each deals with an aspect of the most comprehensive form of belief, which is theistic. The proofs

> ...are perceived to constitute an organic whole of argument, each of them establishing its separate element, and thus contributing to the general result—confirmatory evidence that God is, and complementary evidence as to what God is. The explanation of this doubtless is that the apprehension of God is itself an organic whole, a complex and harmonious process, involving all that is essential in the human mind, yet all the constituents of which are so connected that they may be embraced in a single act and coalesce into one grand issue.[3]

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1. While Tulloch had a superficial knowledge of German thought, Flint belongs to a period of intense research by British scholars into German philosophic and theological speculation. It was the period that produced Edward Caird's A Critical Account of the Philosophy of Kant—the first thorough and accurate analysis of Kantian doctrines to appear in English (1877). Prior to this, natural theologians in Scotland had been content with the general distinction of theistic proofs as either a priori or a posteriori. Tulloch, of course, was among them.
2. Theism, pp. 71-5.
3. Agnosticism, p. 615f.

To put the matter more simply, theistic argument must be "according to reason": that is, shown in its relation to human reason, which is on Flint's view the rational personality. The proofs are simply the various ways in which God manifests Himself, and by which man is enabled—in virtue of his rational nature—to apprehend Him. Thus, the mind is able to apprehend God as Supreme Cause in virtue of its knowledge of itself as effective will: this is the sphere of cosmological proof. The mind is able to apprehend God as Supreme Intellect in virtue of its own intellectual and logical powers: this is the sphere of the teleological proof. The mind is able to apprehend God as Morally Perfect Being in virtue of its traffic with conscience: this is the sphere of the moral proof. Finally, the mind is able to apprehend God as Absolute and Infinite Being in virtue of its speculative powers: this is the sphere of the ontological proof. No one of the proofs by itself is able to carry the weight of refutation that Kant had heaped upon them individually—excepting the moral proof, to be sure.[1] But together, Flint holds that they spell out man's total response to God's total revelation in Nature, Mind, and History. The comprehensive belief when analyzed and systematically confronted with the facts is freed from falsehood and error, and thereby transformed into knowledge. In this sense, it is demonstrated.

Flint's treatment of each of the proofs can be indicated only in a summary way. His reasoning is not unfamiliar, however, for it has been encountered in the Scottish development traced thus far. It should be

1. Flint undertakes a detailed refutation of Kant's celebrated refutations in Agnosticism, pp. 216-235. In general, Flint objects to the distinction between Pure and Practical Reason as being too sharply drawn, maintains that the moral proof on which Kant relied is subject to the same criticisms as the "speculative proofs," and asserts that belief cannot be summarily cut off from knowledge.

apparent that, for all its vast range, Flint's mind has the stamp of the Scottish tradition upon it.

(i) The cosmological proof would validate the belief that "Nature is but the name of an effect whose cause is God."[1] It is in essence an argument a contingentia mundi. The world is demonstrably not a self-existent fact, but gives every appearance—to scientific reason, at least—of being an effect. It must therefore have had a cause; and only a free, rational Will, commensurate with the cosmic effect, answers adequately to the notion of a "cause." "Reason, if honest and consistent, cannot in its pursuit of causes stop short of a rational will. That alone answers to and satisfies the notion of a cause."[2] This latter phase of the proof corresponds in all essentials to Tulloch's doctrine of efficient causation and his reasoning on its behalf. It may therefore be passed over without further analysis. But Flint's use of contemporary science in connection with this proof throws important light upon the ultimate premises of the argument as a whole.

Flint's notions of science belong to a period that witnessed the beginnings of modern atomic and nuclear physics, which have made naturalism in the form that Tulloch knew it less and less tenable. Flint cites contemporary speculation as evidence to establish that the material order has had a beginning which cannot be explained by a materialistic hypothesis that the ultimate reality is simply matter in motion. For example, he singles out for particular emphasis certain corollaries drawn from the so-called "second law of thermodynamics" as formulated by Lord Kelvin,—from whom he had received his scientific training at the University of Glasgow.[3]

1. Cf. Theism, Chapter IV, and Appendices XI & XII; also, Agnosticism, p. 652f.
2. Theism, p. 130.
3. Ibid., pp. 117-8, 359-64. Flint referred to Kelvin as "the greatest

If proven beyond all doubt, this "law" would seem to point not only to the eventual dissipation of energy and the cessation of all movement at a determinate though remote point in time; but, the same mathematical reasoning would indicate an antecedent time when there was "an initial distribution of heat which could not have resulted, according to the known laws of nature, from any previous distribution. The inference drawn is that the world must be regarded as an effect, pointing to a cause beyond itself. A materialistic hypotheis on which the older naturalism had relied leaves unexplained the radical transition from an original insistent chaos to the present substantial cosmos. Chaos in transit is not equivalent to a cosmos. Therefore, the universe is an effect.—Its cause can only be an all-powerful Will.

Flint relies unreservedly upon the progress of science to advance theistic proof—upon further discoveries concerning "the ultimate constitution of matter, the conservation of energy, cosmic evolution, the age and duration of the present physical system."[1] He asserts that truly scientific knowledge, from which all error and falsehood have been eliminated, is both possible and actual. Thus, in connection with the argument from Kelvin's law, he repudiates an attempt to escape certain aspects of the scientific theory by recourse to hypotheses of the German mathematician, Riemann, and others as to a space of n dimensions. Flint's appraisal of the attempt is revealing, particularly in the light of subsequent scientific development in the present century:

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of his teachers" (Macmillan, p. 39), and was undoubtedly more indebted to him than to any of the others. While he did not follow in the line of Kelvin's specialty—molecular and atomic physics—his determination to raise the study of history to the plane of science probably owed something to Kelvin's spirit.

1. Agnosticism, p. 652.

> It is to be hoped that few persons in full possession of their intellects will ever accept a view like this. The imaginary geometry may be thoroughly sound reasoning, but it is reasoning from erroneous premises, and it can be useful so long as it is remembered that its premises are erroneous. They have only to be assumed to be true to experience and reality, and all science must be set aside in favour of nonsense. Logic ought not, however, to be confounded with truth.[1]

Flint's categorical repudiation of Riemann's speculation, his equation of Euclidean categories with truth, his concomitant reliance upon the physical concepts of Newton, are all measures of his scientific outlook. In this respect, Flint as a theologian is no different than the majority of his scientific contemporaries, who constitute what Professor Whitehead has described as the "age of successful scientific orthodoxy, undisturbed by much thought beyond the conventions." In claiming the support of contemporary science, Flint unwittingly accepts its limitations. Only a few of his contemporaries—A. J. Balfour among others, whose Defense of Philosophic Doubt he regards as unduly sceptical—question the scientific "gnosticism" which, if unchallenged, would have precluded the scientific development of the present century.

(ii) The teleological proof would validate the belief that cosmic order is "a manifestation of, and consequently a ground for believing in, Supreme Mind." Or, to state the matter more precisely, "... Order, the proof of which is the grand achievement of science, universally implies mind; ... all relations of order—all laws and uniformities—are evidences of an intelligent cause."[3] The similarity of this hypothesis to Tulloch's formulation of the theistic syllogism is of no help here,

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1. Theism, pp. 362-3.
2. Ibid., p. 131. Flint deals with the teleological proof at length on pp. 65-6, 131-209, 367-397; also in Agnosticism, pp. 227-32, 653, and in various connections throughout his treatment of Anti-theistic Theories. Of the four proofs, he accords this the fullest treatment.
3. Theism, p. 132.

for it must be remembered that Flint rejects intuitive philosophies, mainly as not being consonent with historical development of thought concerning God. A proof more in keeping with the evidence is therefore required.

Flint gives an ungrudging assent to the proposition that "the proof of order is the grand achievement of science." In the current debate between those who would accord, and those who would deny, "continuity" and "development" the status of scientific principles in biological and historical studies, Flint is entirely on the side of the former. He welcomes conclusions in both of these fields as significant contributions to the proof of an all-pervasive cosmic order. He has no part in the contemporary "debate between science and religion," and is entirely out of sympathy with it.

> The theory of evolution has not shaken the principle or lessened the force of the (teleological) argument, while it has widened its scope and opened up vistas of grander design, but it has so changed its mode of presentation that already the Bridgewater Treatises and similar works are to a considerable extent antiquated.[1]

Biological conceptions of evolutionary development suggest that the realm of organic life manifests order of a most profound and comprehensive kind. Flint holds that order characterizes the moral life of man in history also, and is developmental in character. This has perhaps been sufficiently expounded in dealing with his Philosophy of History. He does not hesitate, as had Tulloch, to bring even man's precious "freedom" within the scope of scientific generalization. The study of history is affirmed to be a science,

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1. Agnosticism, p. 653. Flint analyzes Darwin's biological theory in some detail. His general conclusion: if proven, a biological theory of evolution would indicate a comprehensive and sustained creativity rather than the separate and piecemeal acts of Divine creation envisioned, for example, in Chalmers' Bridgewater Treatise. Cf. Theism, pp. 189-209.

or potentially a science, at least, in the fullest sense of the word. Like any other, it gives knowledge prospectively of a system containing and governing a vast area of human experience. All sciences in conjunction gradually uncover the rational framework of the world--system upon system interrelated in a unified cosmic system, an orderly universe.

> There is...everywhere, both in the physical and moral worlds, order and adaptation, proportion and co-ordination, and there is very widely present progress--order which advances in a certain direction to a certain end, which is until realised only an ideal. This is the state of things which science discloses. The question is, Is this state of things intelligible on any other supposition than that of a designing mind?[1]

The teleological inference is that "order universally implies mind." If so, what is the nature of the inference? Flint denies that it is grounded in the intuition of an infinite Reason or Personality, as Tulloch would have it. More than that, he denies that the inference is analogical, as Chalmers would have it. The supposition that the individual mind has a direct knowledge of other human intelligences--enabling inference from the ordered world to God, analagous to inference from human contrivance to a human contriver--is challenged.

> We have no direct or immediate knowledge--no intuitive or a priori knowledge--of the intelligence of our fellow-creatures, any more than we have of the intelligence of our Creator; but we have a direct personal consciousness of intelligence in ourselves which enables us confidently to infer that the works both of God and of men can only have originated in intelligences.[2]

That is to say, knowledge of fellow-intelligences is mediated by the evidences of intelligent, ordered activity in and through "external nature." Character or personality "cannot be heard with the ear, or looked upon with the eye, or touched with the finger," but is inferred from phenomena experienced through one or more of the senses. Ordered sounds, acts,

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1. Ibid., p. 152. Flint holds that science is possible only where there is belief in an all-pervading order. Its achievement is to trace out this belief in detail, thus transforming belief into knowledge.
2. Ibid., p. 77; cf. also pp. 156-8.

occasion the belief and the knowledge that the perceiving mind is confronted with other minds like itself. This, Flint argues, is the logic of personal relations within the microcosm of human society. Knowledge of God in the macrocosm of an ordered universe is said to be had by an identical inferential process. In regard to the rational process, "our knowledge of God is obtained as simply and naturally as our knowledge of our fellow-men."[1] In regard to the vast universe of actual and possible experience confronting human reason, the inference makes large demands upon its powers of attention and reflection.

In general, Flint's teleological proof infers that the Sovereign Will which is the Cause of the world-order is necessarily possessed of wisdom commensurate with the intricate adjustment and system of the universe: He is Sovereign Intelligence, revealing Himself through the media of Nature in the same way that man reveals himself through the media of his own nature. In the last analysis, whether the logic of the inference is properly called analogical or not, the ultimate question involved has to do with the character of communication between intelligences. Flint is contending that the fact of cosmic order and the developments through which it expresses itself are the communications of a Divine Mind. Proof of the belief can only be had by studying and comprehending the mediated thoughts of God in the same way that one would seek to comprehend thoughts presented by fellow men, in expectation of intelligent meaning. It is for this reason that the teleological proof is made to turn upon a particular psychological doctrine which has one outstanding merit: it can be reconciled with the fact of a developing knowledge of God in history.

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1. Ibid., p. 76.

(iii) The moral proof which is the third step of the comprehensive theistic argument would validate the belief that conscience and the moral order of the world manifest God's sovereign Righteousness. What Flint has to say concerning conscience and its witness to God is substantially the same argument already met in Chalmers' theology of conscience. That is, he rejects Tulloch's intuitive morality as not consonent with historical evidence, and reverts to Chalmers' doctrine of moral autonomy. The moral proof begins with conscience as a fact—an inherent voice of authority having rightful control over every spiritual activity of man. This moral fact is indispensible to theistic proof: "There is probably no living practical belief in God which does not begin with the conscience."[1] Flint's views in this respect parallel Chalmers' closely. Where he differs is only in refusing to allow moral reasoning to take precedence over other scientific considerations. "Living practical belief" is of the essence of theistic conviction, but it does not overshadow the necessity of full rational assent, as Chalmers contended, nor displace it in Kantian fashion. Flint quotes from Chalmers extensively and with approval. Further elaboration of the argument from conscience is therefore unnecessary.

It is, however, the addition of a historical dimension to conscience that results in Flint's doctrine of the moral world. If conscience declares the de jure authority of moral law, what has been its de facto power in the life of mankind? What light does this shed upon theistic belief? Chalmers, for one, had hesitated to pursue such questions, being impressed by the inadequacy of attempts to measure the relative power of good and evil, right and wrong, in the history of mankind.[2] Paley, for

1. Ibid., pp. 211-2. The italics have been added to the text.
2. Cf. his Natural Theology, Bk. IV, Chap. VI.

example—and others even earlier in the eighteenth century—had constructed a crude balance of evidence for and against the notion that goodness preponderates in the over-all sweep of history. Deciding in its favor, he gave currency to a momentous conclusion which undoubtedly contributed much to the "doctrine of progress"—perhaps more than has generally been recognized. Flint, well over a century later, expounds a "scientific" view of history which is not blind to the evil, the suffering, the sin, that mar the record of mankind in every age. Yet, he concludes that the story is one of moral progress, growth toward a comprehensive unity of human understanding and endeavor, and the slow realization of human freedom. These are the "laws" which the Philosophy of History vindicate.

> If we examine history as a whole, we cannot but recognize that it has been in the main a process of moral progress, of moral growth. ... Men may be now as guilty, as willful sinners against what they know to be right, as ever they were; in that sense there may be no moral progress; but of this there can be, I think, no reasonable doubt in the mind of any impartial student of history, that the thoughts of men have been surely, if slowly, widened as to liberty, chastity, justice, benevolence, piety—and that their feelings have been correspondingly modified, their manners refined, and their laws and institutions improved.... Age is linked to age, and in the struggle of good and evil which pervades all ages, victory is seen slowly but steadily declaring itself for the good.... Now, whatever be the means by which moral progress is brought about, the testimony which it involves as to the moral character of God is none the less certain.[1]

The evidence of the moral world is that God is Righteous and on the side of righteousness. The Being whose Will creates and sustains the universe, whose Wisdom guides its orderly operations, is not indifferent to moral values, but manifests His righteous purpose in the providential direction of human history.

Flint's criticism of a "moral theology" such as Kant's—which finds theistic belief rooted ultimately in [illegible]

1. Theism, pp. 230-1; cf. also pp. 258-9.

ethical deliverances, and in these alone--belabors the impossibility of separating one undoubted facet of consciousness from the whole. He contends that belief in a moral universe and belief in a rationally ordered universe are on equal footing: the one is as subject to doubt and disbelief as the other.[1] While the evidence of conscience and of moral progress in history contribute much that is essential and indispensible to theistic conviction, it is also a fact that theistic conviction gives necessary support to conscience when its voice is all but drowned out by the strident confusion of suffering and moral evil in the world. "Faith in duty helps us to faith in God: faith in God helps us to faith in duty."[2] It is the conviction of this interrelation between belief in conscience and belief in a God of inviolable providences that ultimately explains Flint's view of history. While he is obviously influenced by current doctrines of progress and evolutionary development, he carefully distinguishes his own view from "those theories which represent history as a mechanically necessitated product, or an inevitable dialectic movement, or a simple organic growth, or the natural consequence of a struggle for existence between individuals and societies, or a fundamental economic evolution."[3] History is an "ethical creation," the free response of moral beings within the bounds of an all-containing Providence. It is a progress compatible with moral freedom and trust, with moral failure and triumph.

(iv) The ontological proof, finally, would validate the belief that God is "infinite, eternal, absolute in being and perfection." The

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1. For Flint's criticism of Kant's moral proof, cf. Agnosticism, p. 230. His own view is set down on p. 653, and at length in Theism, pp. 210-63, 397-423.
2. Ibid., p. 263.
3. Supra, p. 171.

argument as a whole culminates here, drawing together the strains of the previous proofs, molding them into a final conclusion.

> We have ascertained that there is a God, the First Cause of the Universe, the powerful, wise, good and righteous Author of all things. We are conscious, also, that we have ideas of infinity, eternity, necessary existence, perfection, etc.... Having them, no matter how or whence we have obtained them, and knowing that God is, as also in a measure what He is, the remaining question for us is, Must these ideas apply to God or not? Must the First Cause be thought of as eternal or not—as infinite or finite, as perfect or imperfect?[1]

Flint's conclusion is that it must, else the powers of reason to know reality, and to know it truly, in any degree, will be involved in hopeless contradiction. In general, Flint's ontological proof appears to be the crowning reassertion of the "rationalism" with which his theistic view begins and ends.

It is difficult, and perhaps impossible, to do justice to the argument at this point without going into great detail. Since that is impossible, within available limits, and since Flint himself leaves the reader to determine his precise view from cursory remarks on various historical presentations of the ontological proof, a few general indications of its bearing will perhaps suffice. Quite significantly, Flint insists in answer to Kant and Kantians that this proof is not logically first among the four proofs, for it has to do with the ultimate possibilities of knowing which are reached and explored only as a climax of the comprehensive processes of human knowledge.[2] The cosmological, teleological, and moral

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1. Theism, pp. 265-6. Flint deals with the proof at length on pp. 264-301, 423-437; also, in Agnosticism, pp. 220-3, 653-4.

2. In the encyclopedia article on "Theism," Flint carefully points out that this proof "has passed from a stage in which it was present in particular ontological forms into one in which it is set forth in a general epistemological form." (Agnosticism, p. 654.) His presentation of the proof summarizes his epistemology. As he understands it, the task of this philosophical science is to outline precisely what the mind actually knows. It

proofs marshall the evidence to show that a Being of extraordinary power, wisdom, and righteousness manifests Himself through the media of an orderly and moral universe. There remains to be proven the contention that in and with all knowledge of the finite and temporal--knowledge of nature, man, and history, notions of "infinity" and "eternity" are implied necessarily. Flint does not speculate about the exact genesis of these ideas in the human mind. He maintains only that they are present, that they cannot be referred to the mediating cosmos which has presumably been shown by the cosmological proof to be a contingent effect, that they must in consequence be referred to God. This statement of the ontological proof is to be described as "a priori inasmuch as it rests on necessary ideas, but a posteriori inasmuch as it proceeds from these ideas upwards to God in a manner which is essentially analytic and inductive. Only when God--the principle of principles--is reached, can it become synthetic and deductive."[1] This much, at least, is plain: Flint has not here abandoned his objection to theories of intuition and of direct insight into the innermost nature of God. The final theistic problem has to do with the relation of the human mind and its mediated knowledge to ultimate reality.

Flint's view is probably to be interpreted in this way. Either reason is capable of knowing the ultimately real which can only be conceived as existing everywhere and at all times, giving unity to the whole,

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therefore stands at the end of philosophical inquiry, not at its beginning. Kant's Critical Philosophy, according to Flint, errs in attempting to define the limits of knowledge before taking into account what the sciences actually validate as knowledge. The sciences must first reach their synthetic judgments, each within its appropriate and limited sphere, before philosophy can adequately investigate the grounds upon which a priori knowledge is to be had. Cf. his Philosophy As Scientia Scientiarum.

1. Theism, p. 271.

or it is not. To say that it is not is to admit scepticism at the start, and to involve the quest for knowledge, truth, reality, in destructive self-contradiction. But if reason is to be justified in seeking even partial and limited knowledge, it can only be in the confidence that reality in its fullest extent manifests a power, wisdom and goodness that allow of no final contradiction. On this belief, a rational philosophy is at least possible; on a contrary belief, it is impossible from the outset. "It is only by the apprehension of a Being who passeth knowledge that knowledge can be rendered self-consistent; only by the admission that all existence is not included within the conditions of the finite that thought can escape self-destruction."[1] This is Flint's contention, defended against the criticisms of Kant, and others such as Hamilton, Mansel, and Spencer who gave full assent to Kant's celebrated refutation. He argues that reason demands that God be conceived as infinite and eternal for reasons paralleling those given by Kant himself in expounding a moral theology. There is Kantian insight in this passage by Flint:

> The heart can find no secure rest except on an infinite God. If less than omnipotent, He may be unable to help us in the hour of sorest need. If less than omniscient, He may overlook us. If less than perfectly just, we cannot unreservedly trust Him. If less than perfectly benevolent, we cannot fully love Him. The whole soul can only be devoted to One who is believed to be absolutely good.[2]

This is the ontological proof in its ethical aspect! The proof is completed, however, only when the demands of reason in its fullest sense are given their due.

The ontological proof is undertaken in virtue of the speculative powers with which the human mind is endowed. By speculative powers, Flint

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1. Ibid., p. 297.
2. Ibid., p. 301.

evidently means reason enquiring after the Ultimate Reality which becomes known only gradually as belief is refined and brought within an integrated and comprehensive view. Reason is speculative to the extent that it must believe more than it can at present know by scientific demonstration, in order that its apprehension of the oneness and wholeness of reality may not be violated. The ontological proof is speculative to the extent that it must conceive an infinite and eternal God to be the ultimate or "absolute" reality—ever and everywhere manifest in the life of nature, man, and history, yet without being able to give final precision and clarity to its idea of Him. Flint's unified argument concludes by envisioning the speculative task. Even if he had lived to complete the third and fourth stages of the System of Natural Theology, it is clear that he would not have claimed to have exhausted the possibilities of theistic proof: the speculative task would remain—the task of refining the idea of God so as to accord with the progress of science. On Flint's view, theism is not merely "the ennobling complement of all human studies" as Tulloch conceived it; it is a growing synthesis by which the relation of the idea of God to the categories interpreting nature, man, and history are determined with increasing precision. The idea of God is to be "the most comprehensive of ideas, inclusive of all categories of thought and implicative of their harmonious synthesis and perfect realization."[1] Flint's final

1. Both quotations are from the Encyclopedia article on "Theism," appended to Agnosticism: cf. pp. 659-60. Critics of Flint's doctrine among his contemporaries urged that his manner of presenting the proofs in Theism seemed to bring him to an outmoded deistic idea of God as a completely transcendent Being. (Cf. Macmillan, p. 351ff; also, A.S. Pringle-Pattison, The Idea of God (New York, 1920), pp. 299-303.) Because it has been necessary to rely mainly on the statement of the proofs in Theism, the foregoing exposition will perhaps seem to indicate this as an inevitable result. This impression of Flint's thought should be corrected by reference to the Encyclopedia

view is, therefore, that

> ... all thought and experience must of its very nature tend to lead onwards to a fuller knowledge of God. For the knowledge of God, on this view consists in no mere inference reached through a process of theological argumentation, but in an ever-growing apprehension of an everadvancing self-revelation of God: and all philosophy, science, experience and history must necessarily work together to promote it.[1]

With the ontological proof, the fourfold theistic argument is concluded. But it must be remembered that Flint's System of Natural Theology is to be completed only when the results of formal discussion have been restored to the context of historical development.

(D) It now remains to establish Flint's relation to the previous development of demonstrative theism in Scotland. He was an extraordinary scholar, whose theological and philosophical erudition has rarely been equaled or surpassed in Scotland or elsewhere. In this regard, he stands apart with Sir William Hamilton as an exemplar of Scottish learning. But while the content of his theistic philosophy gives ample evidence of wide knowledge and intellectual sympathies, it is plain that Flint's roots were deep in the theological and philosophical tradition of his own country. It is true that his doctrines evidence a tendency to move closer to an essentially rationalistic theism than the views of any of his predecessors. He believes that the task of natural theology is a conclusive demonstration of God's infinite and eternal Presence—sovereign over nature, man, and history—revealing Himself everywhere and in every age. But Flint rarely loses sight of the fact that this is a <u>belief</u>, and that

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article in which he observes that the tendency of theistic speculation is "to remove or correct extreme and exaggerated conceptions of the Divine transcendence and to produce a true appreciation of the Divine immanence, —to set aside deism and to enrich theism with what is good in pantheism." (<u>Agnosticism</u>, p. 654.) Clearly, Flint was not entirely untouched by the rising tide of Idealistic speculation in Scotland, but he was critical of it: cf. his remarks concerning John Caird's Philosophy of Religion in <u>Theism</u>, pp. 435-7.

1. See Footnote, p. 203.

between the belief entertained by man's finite reason and its final demonstration stands the massive fact of an orderly and moral universe. The ability of men to apprehend the true meaning of the cosmic revelation depends upon the extent to which their moral and rational powers have been developed in history. It must now suffice to show briefly that the rational foundations of Flint's view are essentially the principles of Common Sense.

Consider the doctrine that is central to Flint's epistemology—the primacy of belief, and its relation to scientific knowledge. What Flint terms "beliefs" are roughly equivalent to what Reid had designated as the "first principles" of Common Sense, or alternatively the "judgments" or "beliefs" of Common Sense. They are original and ultimate apprehensions in accordance with which man finds his entire rational nature related to the vast reality about him. It is true, of course, that Flint makes a good bit more of the possibility of error being associated with primary beliefs, and urges the necessity of refining them in a systematic way. But it should be remembered that Reid made allowance for the distortion of beliefs in minds swayed "by education, by authority, by party zeal, or by some other of the common causes of error"; he also realized the need to refine ultimate beliefs in accordance with more exact knowledge. Above all, he counseled "candor and humility" in the whole discussion of first principles. Flint seems not to have called this last bit of wisdom into question. Rather, he sees the refining process and the requisite intellectual virtues as rooted in the gradual and progressive development of history. Reid's philosophy reflects the static, Newtonian world of the mid-eighteenth century; Flint's philosophy reflects the developing world of the late nineteenth.

Moreover, as has already been pointed out, Flint's doctrine of "reason" reasserts the anthropocentric outlook of Scottish Common Sense. In adding a historical dimension to theistic reasonings, his System of Natural Theology is intended to do greater justice to the diversity of postive religions and of religious thought; but this does not alter the perenniel Common Sense view that natural theology is inevitably grounded in the personal reality of the human spirit. According to Flint, history is primarily the moral unfolding of human nature through the exercise of freedom--now in opposition to, now in cooperation with, the material and psychic laws of the universe.[1] When this doctrine of history is kept clearly in mind, the addition of a "historical dimension" to theistic reasonings appears to be only an extension of Common Sense premises, not their abandonment. This seems to be borne out amply in the following statement concerning the study of history and its place within the all-embracing system of human knowledge.

> Man, just because man, is capable of knowing more that truly deserves the name of knowledge about human nature and human history than about what is merely material and animal.... He has to interpret nature by himself, not himself by nature. The human mind and its history are in themselves more intelligible than the physical world and its evolution, and may be expected when scientifically studied and philosophically interpreted to contribute more to knowledge in general and to religious knowledge in particular.[2]

While this statement comes close to being the Idealistic contention that nature and mind are related as the "outer" and "inner" of thought, Flint in all probability intends no more by it than any of his Common Sense predecessors intended when they affirmed that reason's fundamental problem is the "problem concerning man"--that the highest philosophy or science

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1. Flint does not perpetuate Tulloch's sharp distinction between nature and spirit, invariable order and freedom.
2. Agnosticism, pp. 321-2.

must begin, if at all, with the one who seeks philosophical or scientific knowledge.

Moreover, while Flint calls his natural theology "rationalistic," it is not rationalistic in Locke's fashion. It knows no second way to knowledge of God that is entirely independent of revelation and can be constituted a standard for judging all that professes to be revelation. Flint is quite clear on this point: a so-called "scientific religion" divorced from the sources of belief in historical religions might claim to depend solely on reason. Indeed, it might succeed in doing so. But like a seed out of soil, it would remain alone--groundless and fruitless, if not completely lifeless. This, Flint asserts, is the indubitable witness of history. The concluding chapter of Theism argues from the failures of the past--in ancient Greece and in more modern times--that historical beliefs will not be displaced by any purely rational creed. A professed revelation rooted in history will overwhelm even a theistic philosophy that undertakes to divorce itself from, or set itself in contradiction to, the evidence of history.[1] Flint reaffirms, therefore,--the consistent view of Scottish natural theologians--that from the standpoint of natural theology, revelation must be given its due. If historical religions have taught that knowledge of God is the result of a believing response to God's self-revelation, it is not for reason to say that it must be otherwise. Reason can only seek to understand the evidence, and to know according to the light that is given. This it can do, and this it must do. Even the Confessionalist Halyburton could hardly disagree that man must know God, and that revelation which does not permit knowledge "can never with any rational man be allowed sufficient to direct men in

1. Cf. Theism, p. 303ff; 314.

religion." It must be said, however, that Flint--agreeing with John Tulloch as against those more directly under the influence of Scottish Confessionalism--is not content that the relation between "natural light," which is reason, and the "light from heaven," which is revelation, should remain indeterminate. Flint's rationalistic premises require that this relation also should be rationalised--and in this respect he goes considerably beyond his Scottish predecessors, Tulloch included.

Flint's advance beyond earlier Common Sense views is best illustrated by his reconciliation of the projected System of Natural Theology with the Christian revelation. Little has been said of Flint's distinctively Christian convictions, because as a natural theologian he is obliged to be as objective as possible in appraising the particular historical revelation which is Christianity. Its unique evidences--the person of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Scriptures and the Church--are to be considered by the natural theologian in the same light as the credentials of any other religion or fact of history. This is in the interest of science. Yet Flint is perfectly aware that Christian belief concerning these evidences demands more than detached appraisal of them. Christian belief

> ... is not mere belief, nor mere belief in religious truth, nor mere belief in Christian truth. It is a self-surrendering acceptance of Christ as of God made wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption unto us; a supreme trust in Christ based on a distinctive conviction as to His character and His relationship alike to God and man.[1]

One might well ask whether such a view of Christianity, taken in all seriousness, can be reconciled with a System of Natural Theology whose avowed aim is to transform all belief into knowledge by the inductive

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1. Agnosticism, p. 487. Cf. also Theism, pp. 317-19.

and deductive procedures of scientific method? Moreover, can an acceptance of Christ "as of God made wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption unto us" be reconciled with the teaching that history has been and will continue to be a progress in the knowledge of God, approximating completely demonstrated truth--that all thought and experience, all new understanding of nature, man, and history, "must of its very nature tend to lead onwards to a fuller knowledge of God." In the perspective of time, it will seem apparent to many that Flint did not realize all the issues raised by his projected theistic synthesis, based upon an optimistic doctrine of providence, and on an optimistic appraisal of natural science and historical science. But it is important to realize that Flint did rationalize the relation of Natural Theology to Christian revelation, to his own satisfaction at least.

In the concluding chapter of Theism, Flint argues that "mere theism is insufficient"--a theme worthy of a Halyburton. But this is not taken to mean that the System of Natural Theology is to culminate in anything less than real knowledge of the real God. Indeed, it is to be a scientifically conclusive knowledge of God as far as it goes, but nevertheless an external knowledge which does not reveal the "heart of God." As a Being of infinite power, wisdom, and righteousness, He is manifest viā naturae--in the ongoing life of nature, man, and history. But the Divine heart of mercy and sacrificial love, the Father's heart which sinful men need most to know, is revealed only in the life and sacrifice of Christ.

> God, in the unspeakable gift of His Son, shows us a power of sacrifice infinitely above anything known among men--an intensity of tenderest fatherly affection of which the strongest fatherly affection on earth is but a pale and feeble reflection; and Christ in His incarnation, life, sufferings, and death, reveals

> to us not merely the power, and wisdom, and goodness of God, but the very depths, if we may so speak, of His heart as a Father, enabling us to feel without a doubt that now indeed are we the sons of God. Nothing but a special revelation, however, could thus unveil and disclose God.[1]

Natural theology culminates in a knowledge of God as Sovereign; Christianity reveals the Fatherhood of God. On Flint's view, even a final demonstration of the one form of knowledge does not eliminate the necessity for the other. It might justly be said--seriously and with due respect--that there is in his thinking a tacit distinction between knowledge of God in his public capacity as Sovereign over the universe and history, and knowledge of God in His private capacity as Father of spirits and Friend of sinners. If Flint was thus influenced at the highest level of theological speculation by the somewhat paradoxical way in which personality manifests itself on the plane of human relations, the anthropomorphism would be understandable: it would constitute a further extension of Common Sense thinking. But this is merely speculation concerning Flint's speculation, which was the concluding task upon which he never fully entered. What is plain is that while the distinction between the idea of God known to the natural theologian and the idea of God known to the Christian is never lost, Flint moves with ease from one to the other with no apparent sense of contradiction, or of paradox more painful than those in which human relations abound.

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1. Theism, p. 318.

CHAPTER VI

BEYOND NATURAL THEOLOGY
JOHN CAIRD'S PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

There are excellent reasons for maintaining that John Caird does not belong to the general development of Scottish theistic demonstration traced thus far, and could well be omitted from this study. There are other reasons, perhaps less cogent when taken only at face value, for holding that Caird was not so completely free from the influence of distinctively Scottish thought as he himself could have wished. But it is not primarily to argue the merits of this issue that he stands at the end of this study. Caird's reputation as an "Idealistic" or "Hegelian" theologian will hardly be questioned by anyone, or the fact that his writings are pervaded by a spirit and by doctrines that spring directly or indirectly from the fountain-head of German Idealism. It is as the representative of the movement that largely displaced the indigenous development of Scottish religious philosophy that he is important here. A consideration of his Philosophy of Religion will serve much the same purpose at the end of this study as did the discussion of Locke's religious teachings at its beginning: that is, it will help to set in relief the distinctive characteristics of that development that has already been considered.

This study was begun by considering the essentially rationalistic assumptions that informed the natural theology of John Locke and his disciples in the eighteenth century, during the time of the celebrated Deistic Controversy. It was shown that in Scotland there was nothing comparable to that movement, but rather, that the whole development of natural theology north of the Scottish border was conditioned and largely determined by a separate tradition of thought. The central problem around which this Scottish natural theology developed was not the question of the "apodictic" demonstrations of reason; it was human nature--the implications and ramifications of being human, of knowing and acting as men who are part and center of nature, yet, who cannot do justice to the most essential elements of human experience without looking beyond nature to Something or Someone whose power, wisdom, and righteousness underly it. In studying this development in Scotland, the traditional theistic "proofs" have been shown to be transformed as the fundamental conceptions of human nature have been altered; and the demonstrative force attached to the proofs has variously reflected the confidence with which human nature and the human spirit have seemed to involve, or be involved in, a Divine order of things. In every instance, it is the doctrine of man that governs the use of the proofs in theistic argument; it is not the proofs that determine what is or is not theistic argument, and consequently what man can or cannot know about himself and his place in the Divinely ordered world. It is human nature and human history that provide the critical evidence upon which theistic belief is founded, if at all. There is a characteristic hesitancy in Scottish natural theology to affirm that the idea of God reached by theistic argument, or within the reach of such argument at any conceivable

point in the future, is conclusive beyond all reasonable doubt. It is characteristic that Flint should conclude his destructive critique of Agnosticism with what amounts to an apology for continued doubt, not withstanding his own arguments to the contrary. Professor Campbell Fraser, whose Philosophy of Theism has many important affinities with Flint's doctrine, insists even more emphatically upon the necessity of recurring scepticism to further the progress of knowledge.[1] These are but indications of the Common Sense view which from its beginnings with Thomas Reid maintained a mediate course between an undue scepticism on the one hand, and an undue "gnosticism" on the other. But, being preoccupied with the profound and penetrating scepticism of David Hume and with the Naturalism that resulted from an inadequate appraisal of Hume's real intention, Scottish thought moved slowly toward the opposite extreme --a rationalism with which Locke might conceivably have allied himself had he lived two centuries after his own time. The frigid intellectualism of Locke's religious philosophy had been dissolved by the heat and passion of Romantic reaction, but the assumption of a practically limitless scope and competence for human reason--now roughly the equivalent of rational personality--was gradually asserting itself, not only in England but also in Scotland. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century--indeed, until the time of the First World War--the "most living and active" school of thought in Scotland inculcated doctrines reached at the climax of the rationalistic development in Germany. In some of its representatives at least, Scottish Idealism was nourished partly by its antipathy to the "timid psychologizing" and "unphilosophical results" of Common Sense

1. Cf. his Philosophy of Theism (2nd edition; Edinburgh & London, 1899); and his earlier Essays in Philosophy (Edinburgh, 1856), especially those dealing with Hamilton and Reid, and with Calderwood's philosophy.

thinking. John Caird, the contemporary of Flint and somewhat older than he,[1] was trained in the tradition of Reid, Dugald Stewart, and Chalmers, but having passed through a time of disenchantment in regard to the aims and achievements of Common Sense, he was instrumental in bringing about the rapid and remarkable growth of an Idealistic theology and philosophy in Scotland.

Caird's knowledge of German Idealism was chiefly the fruit of independent research: it owed nothing to his academic training at the University of Glasgow, and probably very little to published works in English. Such works were few in number when he turned aside from the usual course of Scottish philosophy and theology, to investigage Hegel's massive system. German Idealism first made incursions into the Scottish mind through a number of scattered and independent studies like Caird's. Apart from the diffused Idealism of Romantic literature which was alive to philosophic developments in Germany long before academic philosophy in Britain, there were a few significant attempts to understand Kant and the post-Kantian development culminating in the work of Hegel. J. D. Morell's Speculative Philosophy of Europe provided the earliest history of the movement. Professor James Ferrier of St. Andrews—colleague and warm friend of Tulloch—was a student of German philosophy before the publication of his Institutes of Metaphysics in 1854. Though considerable

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1. Caird was born in 1820 and died in 1898. The first work in which the strong Hegelian or Idealistic influence appeared was his Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion, the Croall Lectures for 1878-9, published in 1880. Though older than Flint, Caird's work belongs in chronological sequence after Flint's early writings on the Philosopphy of History and on Theism. For this reason, he fittingly represents the concluding development of religious thought in Scotland in the nineteenth century, although it is not his representative character that is to be emphasized in this chapter.

Hegelian influence has been suspected, and the Institutes were the first instance of Idealistic philosophy in Scotland in the last century, Ferrier maintained a critical attitude toward Hegel, and described his own philosophy as being "Scottish to the core."[1] Be this as it may, the credit for putting Hegelianism in full view of the British public belongs to another Scotsman, James Hutchison Stirling. His Secret of Hegel appeared in 1865, and marks the real beginning of the development of an Idealistic movement in Scotland. It was at this time that Caird's interest in German speculative philosophy was taking form. He had previously been familiarizing himself with the literature of German theology and philosophy, and the lecture delivered on the occasion of his induction to the Chair of Divinity at Glasgow in 1862 illustrates the trend of his mind toward an idealistic way of thinking.[2] All the major works in which Caird provides himself with the reputation of being an Idealistic theologian appeared much later, after he resigned the Chair of Divinity to become

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1. Cf. the Lectures on Greek Philosophy and Other Philosophical Remains of James Ferrier (ed. by Grant & Lushington; Edinburgh & London, 1866), Vol. I, (B) "Papers Supplementary to the Institutes of Metaphysic." Ferrier wrote, "My philosophy is Scottish to the very core; I disclaim for it the paternity of Germany or Holland; I assert that in every fibre it is of home growth and national texture." (p. 487) There is perhaps more justice in this claim than has generally been allowed, although in arguing for it, Ferrier shows a remarkable knowledge of Hegelian thought.

2. Cf. Edward Caird's "Memoir of Principal Caird," prefacing the posthumous edition of John Caird's Gifford Lectures, The Fundamental Ideas of Christianity, Vol. I., pp. lii-lx. All details concerning John Caird's general and intellectual biography are drawn from this source. Edward Caird asserts that his brother did not undertake his philosophical studies until after his reputation as a preacher was well established; and that when he did, it was in order "to make faith intelligent and intelligible." (p. lxvi.) During a pastorate at Errol in Perthshire, he began a program of independent study in literature, theology, and philosophy. Carlyle and Ruskin exerted a profound influence, as did the literature centering around the Oxford Movement in England and discussing the relation of "Reason and Authority." But his most fruitful undertaking was the mastery of German language and literature; and then the study of German theology and philosophy—first the more orthodox writers, afterwards Schleiermacher, and

Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Glasgow. They are evidently a systematic enlargement of ideas worked out during the period of active teaching. Lectures delivered annually at convocations of the University from 1874 onward are collected in a volume published posthumously as University Addresses. They indicate all-important general conclusions as to the interrelations of science, history, theology, philosophy, and art.[1] In 1880, Caird himself published An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion, which contained the substance of his Croall Lecture for 1878-9. Here he works out in an abstract way the fundamental "idea of religion" and the Idealistic principles to be applied in the study of religion. This volume professes to be nothing more than an introduction however. The final statement of his thought is to be found in his Gifford Lectures, also posthumously published as "The Fundamental Ideas of Christianity. These lectures, given under the auspices of a Foundation dedicated to the study of natural theology, deal with the primary tenets of the Christian faith, and are indicative of the new integration of philosophy and revelation to which Caird's Idealism is dedicated. On the whole, the germinal ideas of Hegel are developed by Caird with considerable originality,[2] and his progress in becoming a "Hegelian theologian" is an index of the growing force which a loosely-knit group of "Scottish Idealists" exerted in their own country, and, indeed, far beyond its borders. In its

finally Hegel. This research and the later intimate association with his brother Edward, who had been introduced to Idealism at Oxford, led to the full development of his views. Cf. pp. xxii-xxvii, lxiv-lxvii.

1. Caird is the only one of the four representative theologians considered in this study who displays a lively interest in the significance of art and the nature of aesthetic truth. Even Tulloch, who had a wide acquaintance with contemporary authors and belles-lettres, seems to have given little thought to the "philosophy of art."

2. Cf. the judgment of T. H. Green, quoted in Edward Caird's "Memoir": op. cit., p. cxx. There will be ample occasion to substantiate this judgment.

distinctly philosophical aspect, Scottish Idealism was represented by Hutchison Sterling and Edward Caird, S. S. Laurie, and Andrew Seth Pringle-Pattison; in its theological aspect, by students trained under John Caird for the ministry of the Church,[1] and by others such as James Lindsay, a student of Robert Flint whose theistic thinking moved with the current away from the Common Sense outlook toward a full-fledged Idealism.

The force and prominence to which Idealism attained in a steady succession of Scottish writings implied, more often than expressed, a criticism of the limitations hitherto accepted by the proponents of a Common Sense theism, who had characteristically shunned speculative heights and failed to bring the whole of their philosophy and science within a single comprehensive system. The appearance of the Idealistic movement in itself raises a question concerning the circumstances that conditioned the transition from the old to the new. Is Scottish Idealism a new and more satisfactory beginning, with Hegel and German Idealism as guides, or is it a further development of doctrines and ideas that had arisen as an ultimate consequence of Common Sense thinking? Is it an abandonment of the traditional point of view from which Common Sense had chosen to survey reality, or a more daring attempt to attain to the outermost reaches of reality from essentially the same standpoint? On this matter, there has been considerable difference of opinion. Edward Caird attributed his brother's departure from the Common Sense tradition not so much to uninspired teaching during his University course as to the inherent inadequacy of the tradition itself.

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1. Cf. ibid., pp. lxix-lxxiii.

> The years during which he was at the University were, on the whole, years of philosophical barrenness. Hume had awakened Kant from his dogmatic slumbers, but had been less successful in his native land, where a philosophy of 'Common Sense' protected men from unsettling thoughts, and, as it were, consecrated the status quo.[1]

This was undoubtedly John Caird's judgment also--an indictment of the use Reid and his disciples had made of "belief" and the cumulating conclusions of the individual sciences, particularly in the matter of theistic proof. The note of disdain in Edward Caird's remark is reminiscent of the way in which philosophers and historians in Germany had habitually regarded the teachings of "the Scottish School."[2] Thirty years earlier, Chalmers had boasted of the self-contained character of Scottish philosophical and religious doctrine, while deploring the obscure speculations coming out of Germany. With the Cairds, the outlook is reversed: Scottish philosophy is barren and Scottish religious thought dogmatic in the bad sense. Inspiration and guidance in matters of higher thought are to be had from Germany. On this view, there is little point in asking whether Common Sense and the new Idealism have any deep-lying affinities.[3] Yet the opposite possibility that the new Idealism might in some sense be the proper destination of the Common Sense development was early recognized. Professor Andrew Seth (Pringle-Pattison), himself deeply influenced by

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1. Ibid., p. xxv.
2. Cf. supra, p. 5.
3. In compiling his Bibliography of David Hume and of Scottish Philosophy, Professor T. E. Jessop has included none of the representatives of Scottish Idealism, on the grounds that this movement, "introduced straight from Germany by Stirling," was "not distinctively Scottish," and being "closely fused with the like movement in England," should be considered in that connection. In the interest of limiting the bibliography, the reasons are entirely adequate. But the indicated divorce of Idealism in Scotland from "Scottish Philosophy" probably reflects a judgment such as Edward Caird's which not everyone, Idealists included, would accept.

Idealism, concluded a survey of Scottish Philosophy by considering its pronouncements on the possibility of "philosophy as system." His finding was that while the main body of purely philosophical doctrine is woefully silent about this matter central to German thought, there is no hostility in principle to an attempt to "embrace all the elements of existence in a final synthesis."[1] He suggested that the alliance of a strong Idealistic concern for system with the principled moderateness of Common Sense procedure would be both possible and desirable.[2] Professor Campbell Fraser, who could speak with greater propriety for "the Scottish School" as one more intimately associated with it, concluded a study of Reid's thought and influence with the judgment that

> ... a humanised Hegelianism, which seeks to restore or retain the often dormant faith in the perfectly good God, and thus in the future of man, may even be taken as in line with Reid, under the altered intellectual conditions at the end of the nineteenth century. It virtually appeals at last to moral faith.[3]

It must be recognized, of course, that in qualifying "Hegelianism," Professor Fraser was recommending that it be seen in a particular light, or rather from a particular vantage point. Then, and only then, could it be regarded as in line with Common Sense convictions.

If it were necessary to choose between Caird's view that Idealism meant the condemnation of Common Sense, and the view of Pringle-Pattison and Fraser that a moderate, humanised, and moralised Idealism

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1. Scottish Philosophy, p. 194ff. The point on which German and Scottish philosophy differ is said to be one of logical procedure. Speaking on behalf of Scottish Common Sense, he writes: "The ultimate unity of things is what we stretch forward to, what we divine, but what we never fully attain. It is our terminus ad quem; it is never so fully within our grasp that we can make it in turn our terminus a quo, and, placing ourselves, as it were, at the crisis of creation, proceed to deduce step by step the characteristics of actual existence in nature and in man." (p. 219)
2. Ibid., p. 217ff.
3. Thomas Reid, pp. 158-9.

might be the destination of Common Sense, the latter would seem to do greater justice to the actual aims and achievements of Scottish Idealists generally.[1] But the choice is not actually necessary. The fact is that Idealism--at least in the form of "Hegelianism"--is an imponderable that has meant many things to many men, and even many things to the same man. The possibility of its being at odds with alternative philosophies, individually or collectively, is therefore great; but so is the possibility of finding elements of fundamental agreement. It is the question of agreement and disagreement that is of importance to this study. It is as a criticism of Common Sense theism that John Caird's "Hegelianism"[2] is now to be regarded--a criticism implied rather than expressed. It is the criticism of one who turned to Hegel for illumination on critical issues--an illumination which he felt could not be found in the religious philosophy of his own country. In general, Caird's Philosophy of Religion sets in relief the failure of Common Sense theism to be fully systematic and speculative, or--from another point of view--its reluctance to agree that man's relation to God and ultimate reality is determinable by speculative philosophy. Common Sense theism stops short of the assertion that

1. The philosophy of S. S. Laurie is an interesting attempt to begin with the "dualism" or "realism" asserted by the Common Sense doctrine of perception (supra, p. 77) and to end with a completely unified and synthetic view, on the Idealistic pattern. (Cf. his Metaphysica Nova et Vetusta: a Return to Dualism and his Gifford Lectures in Synthetica, Vol. II.) Professor Pringle-Pattison attempted a similar reconciliation. He also defended against Absolutists another conviction essential to the Common Sense outlook: "Man's final conception of God is the truth of God for man; it represents the universe as it ought to be seen, and as it was intended to be seen, at the human point of view." (Man's Place in the Cosmos and Other Essays, p. 243; cf. also his Gifford Lectures, The Idea of God, esp. Lectures XIII to XVI.) Other instances might be argued.

2. The question of whether John Caird was a full-fledged "Hegelian" is discussed by Edward Caird in the "Memoir": op. cit., p. lxxvii-lxxviii. He points out that his brother rarely quotes from Hegel. It might also be added that the only work of Hegel to which he acknowledges direct obligation is the Philosophie Der Religion: cf. Prefatory Note to An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion.

reason must, in a priori fashion, give "form" to the "infinite content" which is the interrelated life of man, nature, and God.

From the study of the development traced from Reid to Flint, it should be apparent that the hostility that characterized Reid's attitude toward "speculative philosophies" was gradually abated, and by Flint's time the traditional insistence on an inductive and scientific method for philosophy was not construed to mean that speculative thinking is simply groundless conjecture. To Reid, "speculation" had meant thinking in terms of hypotheses, and he professed to abhor hypotheses with the vigor of a Newton. The plight of philosophy was simply that its endless speculations had ended in chaos, out of which scientific induction seemed to indicate the only sure way; and an inductive philosophy of the mind and its powers seemed the obvious place to begin. Chalmers shared this view largely. But he found a place for speculation. He was drawn to Leibnitz' doctrines, not because they were cogently argued and true, but because, as speculations, they provided a plausible answer to Hume's antitheistic speculations. While the one neutralized the other, inductive philosophy could proceed unhampered to establish certainties. All honor was given to the soundness of the method so persuasively embodied in Newtonian science. Tulloch, for his part, did not doubt the solidity of scientific procedure; but the fact that spiritual "freedom" could not be worked into a thoroughly scientific "explanation" of reality seemed to offer the surest and soundest defense against an expanding Naturalism. To give unity to the resulting picture in which "nature" and "spirit" tend to exclude one another, he resorted to devices of Coleridge, and from Coleridge learned respect for speculative philosophy. It remained for Flint, however, to teach that speculation is

necessary to complete even a consistently inductive philosophy. This conviction has been dealt with perhaps recently enough not to need further elaboration. But while Flint never fully undertook the speculative task he envisioned, John Caird gave his mind to it almost exclusively.

Superficially, Caird's Philosophy of Religion might well appear to be a continuation of Flint's System of Natural Theology. Indeed, it would be completely in line with Flint's thought were it offered unequivocally as a hypothesis—an extremely complex hypothesis intended to complete a unified and scientific account of reality, but as such capable of acceptance or rejection, in part or in whole, upon the basis of irreducible evidence. Like Flint, Caird assumes the prior development of the several sciences, each isolating its particular aspect of reality and probing the secrets of its structure. Like Flint, he assumes a science of history among the rest, and with it a historical science of religions. Like Flint, he teaches that the goal of philosophy is a completed system, that its task is to point out in a convincing way—to demonstrate—the unity within which man is related to his fellow-men, to Nature, and to God. But these points of similarity are in contrast to a large and fundamental dissimilarity: it is Caird's view that in order to form an idea of the prospective unity, the ordinary analytic and synthetic procedure of natural science which is the touchstone of Flint's thinking must be abandoned. For the speculative task, philosophy requires a new approach whereby it can divine the innermost principle upon which the whole of reality is "formed." It must be able to bring into view the skeletal structure of relations predetermining the matured unity. Caird, of course, uses the terms "system" and "unity" in a quite definite sense.

They are conceived on the analogy of the system or unity of an organism, which is commonly defined as a unified structure within which parts stand related to one another and to the whole as being mutually interdependent—in the Kantian phrase, "mutually means and ends." It is in this light that the speculative aim of Caird's Philosophy of Religion is to be understood. On the second page of his Introduction, he writes of this, and of "rational philosophy" in general:

> It does not confine itself to finite things, or content itself with observing and classifying physical phenomena, or with empirical generalisations as to the nature and life of man. Its vocation is to trace the presence and the organic movement or process of reason in nature, in the human mind, in all social institutions, in the history of nations, and in the progressive advancement of the world. ... In all provinces of investigation it seeks as its peculiar employment to penetrate beneath the surface show of things, beneath empirical appearances and accidents, and to find the ultimate meaning and essence. Its aim is to discover, not what seems, but what is, and why it is: to bind together objects and events in the links of necessary thought, and to find their last ground and reason in that which comprehends and transcends all—the nature of God Himself.[1]

The notion of organic unity is clearly a controlling factor—if not the controlling factor—in such a philosophy, the application of which to the study of religion and religious ideas gives promise of a System rational throughout. But it is a System from which Flint's Common Sense System is clearly distinguishable, or at least one to which the preliminary stages of his Natural Theology could hardly be thought to lead.

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1. An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion, pp. 2-3. (All page citations are from the New York edition of 1880.) The phrase "philosophy of religion" appeared in works previous to the period of predominant Idealism in Scotland. The general sense it bore is perhaps sufficiently indicated by Thomas Dick's book published around 1847 and entitled, The Philosophy of Religion; or, An Illustration of the Moral Laws of the Universe. J. D. Morell, the historian of speculative philosophy on the continent, published a book in 1849 entitled, The Philosophy of Religion. That Caird uses the phrase in a consistently Hegelian sense should be increasingly plain in the course of the present chapter.

To set in a concluding perspective not only Flint's doctrines, but also those of Common Sense generally, a few contrasting notions and principles from Caird's Philosophy of Religion must now be considered. By this means it will be possible to indicate the underlying rationale of the natural theology that has been traced to a culmination in Flint's work. Caird's doctrine of history, his epistemology, his conception of reason and of the traditional proofs, and finally his rendering of the relation of the Philosophy of Religion to Christian Revelation—all indicate critical points where Common Sense thought refused on principle to follow the promptings of what Professor Campbell Fraser has termed an unsupportable "gnosticism."

i) A scientific study of history is indispensible to Caird's view, as to Flint's, because, as he insists in an illuminating discussion of the "Relation of the Philosophy to the History of Religion," "... whatever philosophy may contribute to the explanation of history, it is still on history it rests, its highest function is to follow history and to discern its real significance."[1] While an a priori element must be present in a system whose aim is to demonstrate religious truth, or show that it is somehow necessary for thought, Caird iterates constantly that it cannot be introduced at the expense of history. The record of what men have believed concerning God and the manner in which they have worshipped him point out the way that reason must take in order to discover what unity and truth there is in the religions of mankind. "The religious experience of the world is, in one point of view, the philosophy of religion ready-made."[2] With this line of thought, Common Sense is naturally in complete

1. Introduction, p. 311. Cf. the whole of Chapter X.
2. Ibid., p. 310.

agreement. Moreover, when Caird speaks of history—in general or in its specifically religious aspect—he thinks constantly in terms of progress, developing unity, and a gradual realization of human freedom. Flint, for one, could hardly take exception to such usage.

Yet, when closer attention is given to Caird's use of history and his understanding of the historical process, a significant distinction comes into view, which is essentially different from the distinction between "belief" and "knowledge" underlying Flint's philosophy of history. Caird speaks an "empirical knowledge" or "experience" of historical events in the time series, and contrasts this with a "speculative knowledge" of history. A "speculative" or "rational knowledge" of history is an understanding of its process as basically an organic development, wherein the "series of facts and events which constitute its outward form" is transmuted and reinterpreted. The particulars and "differences" of which the record of history is composed belie to some extent the underlying reality—at least in so far as they appear to be distinct, independent, or anomalous events in the time-series and consequently conceal the "organic filaments" that make reality one. "Experience" in itself gives only an "empirical" knowledge which fails to penetrate deeply enough behind the phenomena of temporal succession. But for all this, Caird holds that an empirical knowledge of history is useful and necessary: it does justice to the actual "content" formed by the organic process. Though in the pursuit of knowledge philosophy may

> ...finally translate an evolution in time into a process of thought which transcends time and of which the former (i.e., empirical history) is but the outward expression or symbol, it is only by beginning, not with any audacious attempt to spin a philosophy out of subjective thoughts and reasonings,

> but by an exhaustive study of the data of history, that a true philosophy of religion can be constructed.[1]

Caird is concerned with the data of religious history, but intends to go beyond them--to translate them into a media more suitable to reason's notion of organic unity.

It is quite plain, on the whole, that Flint's philosophy of history moves entirely on the level of what Caird would call an "empirical knowledge" of history. This is what is strongly implied in the insistence that the study of history be "scientific,"--given place beside the natural sciences and required to test its own distinctive hypotheses by the measure of "evidence." The differences and particulars of which history is composed are to be themselves the criteria for testing and verifying any theoretical notion of unity that might be brought to them. This is insisted upon, especially in view of the fact that for Flint the data comprising "history" center in the spiritual being of man: "History is an ethical formation." The rationale of his scientific Philosophy of History becomes clearer in contrast to the current trend of Idealistic thought represented by Caird. In determining that his own study of history be "scientific"--whether he succeeded in making it so or not, Flint sought to ensure on the one hand that the data of man's ethical experience be given their due--that their factuality be respected in the face of arbitrary demands made by prematurely speculative theories; he sought to ensure on the other hand that man's moral experience be placed in proper perspective beside other sciences of fact--that it should not be given more than its due and itself become the occasion for dissolving other indubitable facts, or of forcing them

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1. Ibid., p. 311.

to fit into a particular unifying scheme. Common Sense thought is open to the possibility that history can be meaningful to man, that it can contribute to a synthetic philosophy illuminating the whole of reality. But Common Sense refuses to prejudge the issue, or to pronounce in a priori fashion what that unity must be. Rather, it looks to the moral development of man—to the further proliferation of rational and ethical powers—as the means to a more adequate comprehension of the meaning written upon the tablet of history. The integrity of the text is to be preserved in anticipation of the further enlightenment of man.

Caird's Philosophy of Religion makes free use of the historical data. History in its temporal sequence does not show a single, indubitable pattern of organic development through which positive religions emerge from more primitive forms, eventually to be merged again with higher forms of worship and belief. Caird can assume without much argument, and does so, that the history of religions is a body of loosely connected cults and beliefs which conceal rather than reveal obvious rational meaning. Were it otherwise, to "follow history," would be to find philosophy ready-made simply in the record of temporal sequence. The task of philosophy is to discover an organic unity which lies—as it were—beneath the surface. Consequently, Caird holds it a very real prospect that the evolution of religions in time—Flint's moral progress toward a demonstrative knowledge of God—may be translated into a "process of thought which transcends time." This inevitably involves a certain amount of editing of the historical text, and the re-forming of its contents. The nature of this editing and re-forming will be indicated in connection with Caird's use of the proofs, by which Pantheism, Deism, and Christianity are brought

into organic connection with one another. But something must first be said concerning the Idealistic viewpoint presupposed.

ii) How, it may be asked, is Caird's frank equation of "system" with "organic unity" to be explained? How is this point of view justified? What light does it throw upon the Common Sense approach to the question of forming a "system" of religious knowledge? Caird's Philosophy of Religion is a prolonged discourse upon the Hegelian theme that "The truth is the whole!" This well-known phrase he interprets to mean that the "only adequate form of knowledge" is one

> ... in which the constituent elements of knowledge are apprehended not as isolated and independent terms or notions, accepted each on its own evidence, but as related to or flowing out of each other, so that, one being given, the others follow, and the whole body of knowledge constitutes an organic system.[1]

For religious philosophy, this amounts to the doctrine that the only system in which the sovereign reality of God, the spiritual life and history of mankind, and the elements of Nature can be brought together into a conceivable unity is the organic system of Idealism. This particular system is said to be necessitated at the human point of view by the character of thought itself.

Caird argues that some such system as that of Hegel's Idealism is made necessary by the inability of thought based upon "ordinary consciousness" to reach anything like a system. In pressing this point, he evidently has Common Sense thinking primarily in mind. "Ordinary consciousness" and "ordinary thinking" are said to be in terms of generalised images whose material or sensuous origin still cling to them. Such thinking is wholly inadequate when it is applied to the realm of mind or spirit, where the clear-cut "differences" of the "outward and phenomenal world" do

1. Ibid., p. 216.

not apply. Formal logic, by consecrating the bias of "ordinary thinking," makes a rational system of reality impossible.

> It begins by so disintegrating the universe that it can never restore its scattered elements to unity. It postulates for all things and beings a self-identity, a reciprocal exclusiveness, which by no ingenious machinery of external relations it can ever overcome so as to bring them together again in one rational system or whole.[1]

After disintegrating the vital oneness of reality, thought bound by formal logic must resort to artificial expedients to replace the lost unity. It seeks generalized concepts, which in the nature of the case must exclude the particular and the individual, thereby withdrawing from reality. "Generalization, so far from apprehending reality, is a process which takes us away from it, and the further it advances, the more abstract our thought becomes, the farther we recede from the real, objective truth of things."[2]

As a criticism of the Common Sense approach to "system," there is fundamental truth in what Caird here asserts. It has been shown, particularly in dealing with Reid and Tulloch, that the term "Common Sense" implies a certain analogy to the manner in which the "outward and phenomenal world" is apprehended, and the "principles" or "beliefs" of Common Sense share certain characteristics of the perceptions of the bodily senses.[3] The consequence in Reid's case, for instance, was a philosophy founded upon a number of disconnected first principles, which had a somewhat agglomerate character within the vaguely conceived unity of human nature. But Common Sense itself was to find this view unsatisfactory, and in the name of the rational oneness and wholeness of the human spirit undertook

1. Ibid., p. 217; cf. also pp. 210ff, 227-30. In dealing with this question of logic, Caird touches upon the problem central to Hegel's philosophy. He seems not to have studied Hegel's Science of Logic or his Phenomenology of the Spirit at first hand, relying entirely upon his interpreters: cf. "Prefatory Note" to the Introduction.
2. Ibid., p. 229
3. Supra, p.

to give greater oneness and wholeness to man's view of the total reality, within which he finds himself. The method chosen to achieve this unity was not to assume the partial falsehood of the data presented to the rational mind, or rather the falsehood of their appearing as genuine differences in the structure of reality. Rather, Common Sense is content to hold that human reason does make premature judgments as to the rational structure of reality, and will continue to do so. But for all that, it is still ideally fitted for the philosophical task. As part and center of nature, the mysteries of natural diversity and order are its fundamental concern. As free spiritual reason, it is bound to explore the mysteries of which moral and religious experience give evidence. In endeavoring to give a unified picture of reality as a whole, Common Sense may misinterpret and misjudge the evidence: but this is to be recognized only by further recourse to the evidence. Consequently, with Flint, Scottish thought issues in the position that the rational system of philosophy must be thought and rethought, formulated and reformulated, to conform with man's ever-growing ability to understand the evidence aright. Common Sense, in short, calls for a systematic rethinking of "system" at each new stage of human development.

Caird's criticism of Common Sense presupposes as an alternative that the <u>form</u> which the ultimate system or unity must take is determined for rational thought by its own transparent nature. As Caird interprets Hegel, the logic of Idealism is to characterize the nature and movements of thought--manifesting itself originally in human self-consciousness, and then seen "reflected" in all reality presented to consciousness. Thought is said to find in itself an organic unity, binding together differences and opposites in such a way that the very opposition contributes to the

vital and developing oneness of the whole. Thought proceeds with its task by showing in detail that all reality is formed in its own image. In every matter for scientific reflection, the function of the higher logic is simply the function of thought itself: to show that the truth is the whole. Speculative knowledge is no less than "truth grasped in its absolute necessity and coherence as an organic system or process."[1] The method of logic is to retrace in thought the organic development underlying whatever "things or beings" it contemplates. If the part finds its life in the whole, the idea of it must indicate not only its individuality, but also its articulation within the organism of truth.

> The highest proof of the reality of an idea is that in which reason grasps the inner, genetic nature of its object, enters into the very process of its formation, and so recreates it for thought. When we have thus proved a truth, not by the mediation of other and arbitrarily selected notions, but simply, so to speak, by looking on and following the path which thought takes in its own necessary movement, then the result we reach is grasped with a clearness and certitude which it is impossible to exceed; for this is a process in which the intelligence identifies itself, so to speak, with the very object to be known; or in which the process by which we reach the truth is, at the same time, the proof that it is the truth.[2]

On this view, a particular idea of religion or of God can be thought necessary if and when its place in the organic unity of thought can be shown with precision; or, in more Hegelian terminology, if and when it is shown to be a constituent "moment of the universal system." A Philosophy of Religion is in essence a genetic account of the way in which the idea of religion and of God has been developed in historical revelations, from their most primitive manifestations to their highest expression, which Caird finds in Christianity.--From the Common Sense point of view, there is no a priori reason to rule out a genetic approach to religion, and through

1. Introduction, p. 175.
2. Ibid., pp. 309-10.

it to the ultimate system of reality, if its hypothetical character is borne in mind. That is, the evidence of the positive religions themselves must be allowed to be the final standard of judgment for this or any succeeding attempt to view the religious experience and convictions of mankind within an intelligible universe of meaning.

iii) There is evidence to show, however, that Caird would not allow the Philosophy of Religion to be regarded as in the same category with a Common Sense hypothesis, or belief, concerning the ultimate system of reality. The evidence is Caird's doctrine of reason, which expounds another celebrated epigram of Hegel: "Whatever is real is rational."[1] By this he understands in general that, whatever the end of the cosmic development within which the human spirit is related to God, to nature, and to history, it must conform in final structure to the structure of reason manifest in human self-consciousness. The consequent rationalism, when viewed in some detail, throws important light upon the contrasting aims of Common Sense "rationalism."

It is Caird's teaching that the task of reason on entering the sphere of historical religions and beliefs is "to purify (their) intuitions from foreign or spurious admixture."[2] This is to assume that the evidence of the religious consciousness of mankind is of inevitable importance to any philosophic consideration of the truth of religion,[3] as has already been indicated. Caird characterizes religious consciousness as a spontaneous

1. Cf. Introduction, p. 2.
2. The Fundamental Ideas of Christianity (Glasgow, 1899), Vol. I., p. 46. The second of Caird's Gifford Lectures, entitled "Faith and Reason," states in a summary way the doctrine of reason argued at length in the Introduction, Chapters I to III.
3. It will be shown in connection with the "proofs" that Caird's rationalism is by no means equivalent to the eighteenth century rationalism which asserted that the truth of religion and religious ideas must be judged on

faith, belief, "intuition," resulting in a certain idea of God with which not only the intellect but the entire personality of the believer is involved.[1] But, it is argued, the spontaneity and intensity of religious consciousness do not in themselves guarantee that the idea of God formed in this connection, and the related ideas of man's spiritual being and well-being, are adequate to the reality upon which they depend for meaning. In fact, strongly held beliefs concerning God's Being and man's well-being appear to stand in the sharpest contradiction. The task of reason is therefore to judge and to "justify" faith in so far as possible. "To infuse... into the spontaneous and unsifted conceptions of religious experience, the objective clearness, necessity, and organic unity of thought—this in religion as elsewhere is the aim of science."[2] In such statements as this, Caird strongly suggests that reason is able to elicit from religious experience characteristics that are not carried upon the face of it. Faith somehow conceals its own true meaning, but reason from the standpoint of surer thought can bring it to light.

> Philosophy seeks to lead us to a higher point of view, from which the seeming contradictions (of faith) vanish, from which reason, following in the wake of faith, grasps the great conception that the religious life is a life at once human and divine—...that the finite rests on, and realizes itself in, the Infinite; and that it is not the annihilation, but the realization of our highest freedom, in every movement of our thought, in every pulsation of our will, to be the organ and expression of the mind and will of God.[3]

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the basis of considerations remote from the actual deliverances of religious experience: in fact, the proofs of eighteenth century religious philosophy, of whatever party, are adjudged "deistic" and forthwith dismissed.

1. Cf. Fundamental Ideas, I, pp. 39-43; also, in more detail, Introduction, p. 39-79.
2. Fundamental Ideas, I, p. 43. The underlining has been added to the text.
3. Ibid., p. 54. The underlining has been added to the text.

In short, reason brings to religious experience its own organic conception of reality, and interprets experience accordingly.

But, it must be asked, what right has reason to do this? Caird maintains that it is simply the right of reason to think in accordance with the requirements of its own nature. "The mind demands" is a phrase recurring again and again, and the requirement expressed each time is that the diverse elements of experience—the "differences" that obtrude themselves upon the unreflective consciousness—be viewed in the same light as the differences which together compose the unity of self-consciousness. That is to say, Caird's philosophical outlook is grounded in a particular view of rational self-consciousness in man. "Reason" in this context is once more the entire rational self—as Flint and Tulloch conceived it, "regulating all and not dispensing with any of the principles and powers of human nature": specifically, it embraces the "moral powers" as well as the "intellectual" and "speculative powers," "practical reason" as well as "pure reason."[1] But it is the rational self viewed primarily as a

1. This deserves emphasis here because the limitations of this thesis make it difficult to do justice to the moral or ethical undertone informing all of Caird's thinking. Edward Caird wrote of his brother that "...it was always the ethical bearings of principles that most strongly interested him, and on these he spoke with most force and originality. He was drawn to Hegel, therefore, most of all, because he seemed to find as the basis of all Hegel's speculation a close and living perception of the facts of the moral and spiritual life." ("Memoir," p. lxxv.) This judgment is amply borne out in the Fundamental Ideas of Christianity, where the ethical bearing of speculative doctrine is carefully indicated in relation to specifically Christian ideas. The Introduction, however, which gives the clearest and fullest statement of Caird's philosophical premises, would hardly indicate that its author was "most strongly interested" in the ethical import of the system outlined. Only Chapter IX on "The Religious Life: Relation of Morality and Religion" shows clearly that the organic and dialectical character of speculative reason has its counterpart, mutatis mutandis, in the life of moral consciousness: "Morality or the moral life may be described as that solution of the contradiction between man's higher and lower nature which is accomplished by the transformation of the lower into the organ or expression of the higher." (p. 275.)

differentiated unity. It is a developing organism of thought in which the self-as-subject is set over against the self-as-object, yet both are reunited in the larger selfhood of the whole.

> Self-consciousness is not a simple notion or one which can be thought of as excluding from itself all difference. It includes in it of necessity two elements, a self which is conscious and a self which is the object of consciousness, a self which thinks and a self which is thought of; and these two not added to each other or in external contiguity, but in inseparable correlation.[1]

Reason, then, is the rational self, differentiated yet one, to which the fragmentary and diffuse conceptions arising out of religious experience are brought for <u>assimilation</u> into the organic structure of thought. Caird argues at length that this structure of reason is the necessary key to a true and adequate philosophical system. Thought and existence, mind and matter, finite mind and Infinite Mind, for all their profound differences, are united by an even more profound unity, just as the subjective self is distinct from, yet bound to, the objective self within the organic life of self-consciousness.[2]

There can be little doubt that the view of "reason" expounded by Caird is on the face of it an extension of the rationalistic trend that has been traced down to the time of Flint, but that <u>it is nevertheless fundamentally alien to the Common Sense view of "reason."</u> Debate about the competence of man's rational powers to enter into the sphere of religious reality and judge of its verities is, of course, the nerve-center of the problem of natural theology, or very close to it. Scottish treatments of this question have been placed primarily against the background of a fairly distinct heritage of thought. In Confessionalist times, the sphere illuminated by "natural light" was severely limited: though a rational and

1. <u>Introduction</u>, p. 223f.
2. For a fuller statement of Caird's Idealistic argument in summary form, cf. <u>Introduction</u>, p. 205.

responsible creature, man is a being whose reason is distorted by sin, with the consequence that it is utterly incapable of reaching a significant and saving knowledge of God without a powerfully transforming revelation. Some taught that at best, natural reason can discover for itself its own inability to find out God as He truly is, and in discovering this will presumably turn to the clear revelation freely offered in Scripture. But this view gave rise to difficulties. Hume's incisive logic convinced many that a proved inadequacy of reason would be tantamount to scepticism. Hume also indicated, by life as well as by thought, that one who fully allowed for such inadequacy would not inevitably come to revelation in humility and expectancy to learn of God's sovereign reality and gracious purposes, but might just as readily assume the mein of polite detachment—even hearty indifference—to anything but the passing show of nature and time. Few Scotsmen since seem to have been able to forget the lessons taught so forcefully by Hume, whom many—even of the most devout—have regarded as the nation's greatest philosopher. While a determined "rationalist" such as Flint could jettison the "agnostic" teachings of Hume, he appears not to have been tempted to blink the fact of Hume the man, who with great personal integrity could repudiate truths indispensible to Flint himself. Scottish religious thought from Reid onwards has been shown to be a developing reaction to the consequences of Hume's "passional," amoral, and basically irreligious outlook on the human spirit. In the nineteenth century, Chalmers, Tulloch, and Flint, each in turn expanded the "franchise" of the rational spirit of man—of his conscience as well as of his intellect—thereby widening his sphere of competence for acquiring real knowledge of the real God. This development is well described as a growing

enfranchisement of reason: it was conceived by Common Sense thinkers to be a responsible freedom enjoyed by reason for the service of Truth, but subject always to the final determinations of reality itself—not excluding the disclosures of a Divine Revelation. This contrasts with Caird's teaching concerning the speculative powers of reason. On his view, reality must somehow be made to fit into the ongoing process of organic self-consciousness. On the Common Sense view, though there is a strong reliance upon reason, there is still room to hold that it is man himself who must become fit—in mind and also "in heart"—to apprehend the true meaning of nature, history, and the Eternal revealing Himself through nature and history. So also, within the framework of Common Sense thinking, there is room to believe, as did Flint, that there are truths dimly manifest, which to man in his immaturity can only appear to be "above reason." There is room to believe, as did Tulloch, that there are other truths which to man in his moral rebellion and perversity can only appear to be irrational surds "contrary to reason." Caird challenged both distinctions—truths "above reason" and truths "contrary to reason"—as being incompatible with his own thought,[1] and no doubt they are. His Idealistic doctrine requires implicit confidence in the omnicompetence of reason.[2] While Common Sense is constrained to believe that reality patiently awaits the maturity of man as a rational spirit, the Idealist forecasts—rather impatiently—the maturity of reality, so that the capability of reason may be undisputed.

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1. Cf. Introduction, pp. 64-79.
2. Of the claim that the powers of reason may be inadequate to the speculative ideal, Caird writes: "It may be answered, in general, that the only way in which philosophy can prove its rights is by philosophising. The capacity or incapacity of reason to deal with any object or class of objects cannot be determined by a preliminary inquiry, for this, if for no other reason, that the inquiry could only be conducted by the faculty which is impugned." (Ibid., p. 4.)

iv) It is in the use of the proofs, and in the interpretation given to them, that the contrast between Caird's Philosophy of Religion and the Common Sense approach to religious truth come into clearest focus. Caird's observations upon the proofs[1] afford a useful basis for comparison with the views already discussed. He agrees emphatically that the proofs in the form they had received at the hands of Locke and the eighteenth century do not, and in the nature of the case cannot, amount to a rational demonstration of God's reality. Caird simply endorses the Kantian criticism of the "theoretic-dogmatic" form in which they had been cast. But further inspection leads him to the conclusion that the cosmological, teleological, and ontological proofs—in that order, and without any mention of a "moral proof"—embody deeper rational meaning than is apparent on this superficial view. They designate three necessary moments in the organic development of religion in the individual consciousness, and also in human history. "Viewed as an analysis of the unconscious or implicit logic of religion, as tracing the steps of the process by which the human spirit rises to the knowledge of God and finds therein the fulfillment of its own highest nature, these proofs possess great value."[2] If elaborated by exhaustive psychological and historical analysis, the somewhat abstract form given the proofs in the Introduction would presumably establish the necessity of religion in general, and of the highest form of religious thought, which for Caird is Christianity. The cosmological proof, or argument "from the contingency of the world," translated out of its abstract form is said to be

> ... simply the expression of the fact that the first dawn of religious feeling may be traced to the impression which our experience of life forces upon us of the transitory, unsubstantial,

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1. Cf. Introduction, chapter V, and Fundamental Ideas, lectures IV to VI.
2. Introduction, p. 133.

> evanescent character of the world on which we look and of which we form a part.[1]

It gives rise to an essentially pantheistic view of God and His relation to the world, and accordingly indicates that the earliest religious consciousness--whether in the individual or in the race--is a form of Pantheism. But the seed of reaction lies in the heart of a belief that allows all finitude and difference to be absorbed into the undifferentiated life of Deity. The teleological proof, or argument from the experience of finite freedom, represents the recoil of the rational spirit in man from the all-engulfing abyss of Pantheism and the assertion of an opposite and equally inadequate view: that of Deism.

> The transition to this idea is explained by the need which the mind feels to get beyond the alternatives of Contingent and Necessary as in the cosmological proof, and the first effort to satisfy this need is expressed by the notion of a necessity which is not conditioned by the contingent, which is complete in itself and self-determined. In the idea of an all-wise Creator or Designer we have the conception of a cause which is not merely the correlate of an effect outside of itself, but which is self-conscious and self-contained, who freely, or of His own will and pleasure, creates and works out certain purposes or ends in the world; and as these ends indicate skill, contrivance, plan, we infer in Him not only infinite power, but also infinite wisdom or forethought.[2]

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1. Ibid., p. 135; cp. Fundamental Ideas, p. 88ff. The core of Caird's argument is contained in the following passage: "It is not the reality, but the unreality, of the finite world that gives rise to the consciousness of God. It is not from the affirmation, but from the negation, of the finite that the human spirit rises to the conception of the infinite .... The very consciousness of a limit is the proof that we are already beyond it. God is not the conclusion of a syllogism from the finite world, but the prius or presupposition which reveals its presence in the very sense of our finitude and that of the world to which we belong." (This passage is taken from Caird's study of Spinoza: Edinburgh & London, 1888, pp. 22-3.)

2. Introduction, p. 141. It is a revealing fact that the "teleological proof" receives no further justification in Caird's scheme than the explanation that it is a reaction to the error of the Pantheistic view. Rather than defend the "truth" of Deism, as he does for Pantheism, he uses his logical vigor to expose the inadequacy of the Deistic "dualism" in

The teleological proof is here bound to an analogical form. Caird subjects it to the criticism that the idea of a Divine "Creator" implies the crude anthropomorphism of forming the Infinite in the image of the finite--of picturing God as an artist shaping matter that is external to Himself, with which He is only temporarily concerned. A view so obviously exceptionable must give way to a higher, which is the essence of the ontological proof: it is the doctrine that God is "Absolute Spirit" who "manifests Himself in the differences of the finite world, and in these differences returns upon or realises Himself."[1] Here the Pantheistic and the Deistic insights are fused in organic unity. The finite world--the realm of nature, human nature, and history--has no life of its own apart from God, but is an intelligible system of meaning when it is conceived as bound in organic relation to the Infinite Mind, whose objective manifestation it is. God, on the other side of the relation, so to speak, must be conceived as "realizing Himself" in and through the life of His "creation." From the human point of view, to explore the inner workings of finite self-consciousness is to discover an idea of God "whose absolute objective reality

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which it issues--the "externality" and "arbitrariness" that characterize its conception of God and His relation to the world. This seems to be tacit recognition that the Deistic Movement, and indeed the entire development of eighteenth century rational theology, can have no positive significance within an essentially monistic system of religious thought. (Cf. ibid., pp. 141-53.

1. Ibid., p. 255. The reasoning behind this doctrine is contained in the following passage: "There is involved...in man's spiritual nature a consciousness which goes beyond his consciousness of himself and things without--an absolute self-consciousness which is the unity of all thought and being. It is of the very essence of man as a spiritual, self-conscious being to transcend the finite, to rise above the world of inner and outer experience, seeing that neither would have any meaning or reality if they did not rest on and imply a consciousness deeper than the consciousness of the individual self, deeper than the consciousness of Nature, a universal Mind or Intelligence which is the prius and the unity of both." (Ibid., pp. 320-1.)

is so fundamental to thought, that to doubt it implies the subversion of all thought and all existence alike."[1] The idea of God thus reached shows Him to be Infinite Self-Consciousness "whose very nature it is to reveal Himself in and to (finite minds)." The ontological proof is the climax of the movement of religious thought, yielding a "conception of the nature of God and of the nature of man which makes religion necessary by making it, in one sense, the highest realisation of both."[2] This, Caird asserts, is the Christian view in essence.[3]

In contrast to this closely-knit development, the Common Sense use of the proofs--whether by a Reid or a Flint--appears to be an assemblage of arguments which defy the "necessary movement" of religious thought outlined by Caird. It cannot be worked into the scheme of the triadic proof. Quite apart from objections based upon a more or less scientific study of religious psychology and history,[4] there is a deep-seated resistence in the Common Sense tradition to a view that knowledge of God is an organic growth within the all-embracing Self-Consciousness of the Infinite--the "unconscious or implicit logic" of whose "process" is brought to light by

1. Introduction, p. 158.
2. Ibid., p. 159.
3. Cf. Fundamental Ideas, Lecture VI. Caird's indebtedness to Hegel's Philosophie der Religion is perhaps obvious enough in this account of the "proofs" and of the historical relation of Pantheism, Deism, and Christianity: it will not be emphasized further. Edward Caird's Evolution of Religion follows a somewhat different triadic pattern, tracing the development of religion from the "objective forms" of the earliest, through later subjective forms, to an ultimate reconciliation of the two in Christianity. Accordingly, religion is defined as a "more or less developed consciousness of that infinite unity which is beyond all the divisions of the finite--particularly the division of subject and object." (Evolution of Religion, Vol. I, p. 82.)
4. Caird would in all probability have replied by pointing out that any account of religious development that would satisfy the usual conception of scientific study would be nothing more than an "empirical knowledge" of religious experience unless rendered fully scientific by translation into the organic system of reason.

an Idealistic Philosophy that must revise the data of "ordinary consciousness" to do so. This resistence is in spite of the fact that Common Sense at its later stages would endorse Caird's judgment against much that had passed for theistic demonstration—from which Reid and Chalmers, for example, had not entirely disengaged their thinking.

> Genuine religious conviction can never be the result of a balancing of logical arguments: it cannot be a belief produced by a series of external proofs, which implies no relation of the spirit of man to the thing believed. The proof of religion cannot be separated from its essence. You can no more argue a man into a belief in religion than into a belief in art or morality.[1]

But Common Sense thinkers, beginning at the standpoint of religious consciousness, pursued a significantly different course. One side of their argument had been to insist increasingly that only that be deemed knowledge of the Infinite which enables man to know wholly—that is, with the assent and commitment of his entire being, and never in violation of any essential element of his rational nature. He dare not believe with his mind, for example, what his conscience declares false—nor again believe "with his heart" what his "head" knows to be false. Personality is one, a living center of diverse experience, ever seeking to "see life clearly and see it whole." In this sense, and in the degree that it can be said to know anything, the human spirit "demands"—indeed, cannot help "demanding"—a system of reality that is consonent with its own rational being. This is the burden of the Common Sense reasonings whose developing "inwardness" has been shown to dominate and give form to all "demonstrations" of natural theology. In this view, Common Sense seems to be incorrigibly "rationalistic." This rationalism expresses itself typically in its opposition to a Kantian dichotomy between the religious determinations of

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1. University Addresses (Glasgow, 1898), p. 221.

"pure" and "practical reason": such opposition is grounded--vaguely by Chalmers, specifically by Tulloch and Flint--in the unity and oneness of man's rational being. The boldly theistic conception of God as Infinite Personality reflects a concomitant rational "demand" that the Ultimate be in no case less than a Being able to create, sustain, and where necessary reform, the moral and rational spirit of man. But the other side of this same Common Sense doctrine is the recognition that such an approach to a systematic philosophy of religion is bound to the standpoint of finite reason. Any reasoning that begins, as does Caird's "cosmological proof," by undermining the profound differences between the finite and the Infinite--that continues, as in Caird's "teleological proof," by discounting these differences further, is subject to radical error. On the Common Sense view, there is room for error--for the possibility of irreligion, false religion, irresponsible religion, and of an improper synthesis that dissolves spiritual contradictions which man has no right to dissolve. All this is short-circuited by an argument which insists on making the human spirit organic to that of God, which "justifies" all manifestations of religion as being "necessary stages" in the process of religious development. Common Sense religious philosophy is in principle bound to such manifestations of God as are given to the reason of a finite spirit, and is therefore opposed to a system bent upon organic unity without final recourse to such evidence as has been given to the finite spirit in the course of man's religious history.

v) It is indicative of the force Caird attributes to his organic system of reason that he does not hesitate to employ it as the means of rendering Christianity "intelligent and intelligible." His Gifford Lectures

are professedly a detailed elaboration of the idea of God and religion indicated abstractly in the "ontological proof." Three principles are enunciated to show the essence of Christian doctrine illustrate his intention.[1] (a) According to the first, Christianity asserts that God is Infinite Mind or Intelligence "which constitutes the reality of the world, not simply as its external Creator but as the inward Spirit in and through which all things live and move and have their being." This Caird takes to be a distinctive mark of the Christian idea of God, and the essence of the doctrine of the Trinity: the Divine Self-consciousness has the same differentiated character as the human--embracing difference within infinite unity in order to realize itself fully. (b) Further, Christianity is said to assert that "...by its very nature, Infinite Mind or Spirit has in it a principle of self-revelation--a necessity of self-manifestation to and in a world of finite beings." This "necessity of manifestation" is the truth which the doctrines of the Logos, of Incarnation, and of Atonement, are intended to body forth. Christ revealed supremely the God who must realise His own nature in acts of Self-giving love, even toward a recalcitrant humanity, for this is the means of His own Self-fulfilment. (c) Finally, Christianity is said to affirm the reality and dignity of the finite spirit of man because "...the infinitude of God..., so far from involving the negation or suppression of the finite world, is rather the principle of the individuality and independence of nature and man."[2] Against this background Caird projects the Christian doctrines of man, sin and redemption, and everlasting life. In time and eternity, the finite enjoys its own well-assured life, not in spite of, but because of its being

1. Fundamental Ideas, Vol. I, pp. 143-4ff.

2. This is a principle strongly asserted in the broader philosophical context by most Scottish Idealists, against radical Hegelians who would sacrifice the individuality of finite spirits to the dialectic of the Absolute. Cf. esp. Professor Pringle-Pattison's Hegelianism and Personality (Edinburgh & London, 1887).

grounded in the all-embracing life of the Infinite. The final result of Caird's interpretation is a Christianity that is thoroughly systematized. Its "mysteries" are to a large extent rationalized and rendered intelligible. Its "economy of redemption" is seen to be the "highest realisation" of the nature of man and of God. This completed system of Christian thought, with its definite conceptions of the relation within which man is related to God, to nature, and to history, is said to be necessary for thought because it follows out most completely the logic implicit in the structure of rational self-consciousness.

The development of a natural theology or rational theism in Scotland—which it has been the task of this study to trace—began under the dominating shadow of the theological system embodied in the Westminster Confession. The situation is now reversed, for in Caird's Philosophy of Religion Christian doctrine receives its "form" from an Idealistic system. Or perhaps, with greater fairness to Caird, it should be said that he made a resolute effort to graft together the religious essence of historical Christianity and the organic system of a modified Hegelianism. There is some reason to believe that he was not entirely satisfied with the success of his undertaking—that in his handling of Christian doctrines relating to the facts of sin and evil, for example, he recognized certain inadequacies and limitations of the system outlined in the Introduction.[1] But to the end, Caird seems not to have sensed any radical incompatibility in

1. E.g., the Introduction recognizes a "discord in man's being, of which morality is the partial, religion the perfect solution." (p. 264.) This discord is handled in simplified "dialectical" fashion as a conflict between the "animal nature" and the "universal element" in man, which is partially resolved in moral endeavor and "perfectly resolved" in religion, through the "elevation of the finite to the infinite" which makes man "the actual partaker of a divine or infinite life." (p. 294.) In four lectures of his Gifford Series (VIII-XI) dealing with "The Origin and Nature of

the attempt to give an idealistic "form" to the "content" of Christian faith.[1] Theology and philosophy, ideally, are to be fused together, in which event there is no longer room for such a distinction as that drawn between "natural theology" on the one hand, and a "theology of revelation" on the other. For Common Sense thought, however, this distinction is never completely lost although a Flint may envision an ever greater approximation of scientific thought to an adequate knowledge of God's sovereign reality above nature and history. Confessionalist theologians had at the outset distinguished sharply the truth and "sufficiency" of their own Christian creed from the error and insufficiency of all non-Christian creeds. But, as has been shown, the process of refinement which began with Hume led to a considerable modification of this distinction, in the direction of attributing a measure of truth and genuine insight to religious views other than the Christian, and more especially to those thought through with philosophic or scientific precision. Accordingly, "natural theology" came to be regarded by Flint as a thoroughly scientific approach to religion and to the ultimate realities with which all religions are in some way concerned—God, the human spirit, nature and that which is beyond nature, time and eternity. The wide realm of human religion, including also scientific thought concerning religious verities, are to be his evidence—from which Christianity as a historical phenomenon is not to be excluded. But Flint, remaining true to the tradition of Common Sense,

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Evil," Caird wrestles with much harder statements of the facts involved, gives a large measure of assent to Augustinian theories, points out the inadequacy of his earlier thought on the matter (Fundamental Ideas, II, pp. 42-52), and indicates a profound sensitiveness to the essential irrationality of evil and sin.

1. Edward Caird remarks in he "Memoir" of his brother, "Perhaps he did not realise...how great must be the transformation of the creed of Christendom, before, in the language of Goethe's well-known tale, the hut of the fisherman can be transformed into the altar of the great Temple of Humanity." p. lxvii.

continued to distinguish this general procedure and its results from Christianity regarded as a special revelation.

> If there be a certain amount of knowledge about God and spiritual things to be derived from nature—from data furnished by perception and consciousness, and accessible to the whole race,—while there is also a certain knowledge about Him which can only have been communicated through a special illumination or manifestation—through prophecy, or miracle, or incarnation—the distinction must be retained.[1]

As a real Person, confronting all men in and through His works, God is known to a greater or lesser degree. This is the truth that renders intelligible the history of religions and of religious philosophy in every age—so diverse in their understanding of the attributes of the Divine Reality, yet all witnessing to the Eternal Presence in the midst of nature and history. The responsive growth of mankind in spiritual maturity is characterized by an increasing capacity of mind and heart to apprehend the power, wisdom, and goodness of God. His real Presence is never completely hidden—except from those who have inflicted spiritual blindness upon themselves;[2] and within limits, every man is free to apprehend God as he can, in accordance with the rational and ethical development of his own spirit. But to establish this is to regard religion and religious truths only from an external vantage-point—impersonally, in a manner alien to vital religion. As a real Person, God for His part is free to reveal His heart and His purposes in whatever way He wills. It is the corresponding part of human science to recognize the Divine prerogative in this matter, and to insist that however God chooses to manifest Himself most completely and decisively, man allow the evidence to determine the Divine meaning and not be overhasty in imposing a conveniently intelligible

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1. Theism, p. 327. Cf. the entire passage from which this is taken, pp. 323-9.
2. This is Flint's "agnostic."

"form" upon it. On this point, the spirit of science and the spirit of religion are at one: if there is any respect in which scientific philosophy may be said to "justify" religion, this is it. Christian theology is to be regarded, from the Common Sense point of view, as the science of a special revelation, a unique Self-disclosure of God in Jesus Christ, "made wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption for us," and manifest to spirits prepared in repentence, faith, and love, to receive it.[1] While natural theology seeks a knowledge of God in breadth, so to speak, Christian theology aspires to a knowledge of God in the unique depth that is possible only when Personality reveals its inmost heart in concrete evidences of life and sacrifice to those with "eyes to see and ears to hear."

The fundamental contrast between Caird's Philosophy of Religion and the theistic development culminating in Flint's System of Natural Theology can not here be investigated further. It must be admitted that the use to which Caird's thought has been put does not do full justice to the force and originality of his mind: when Caird's paramount debt to Hegel is remembered, lucidity is in itself a feat of originality. But the very appearance of a strong Idealistic movement in Scotland--of which Caird was the outstanding theological representative--raised questions of a most basic sort concerning the rational foundations of Scottish "demonstrative theism." A passage from Professor Campbell Fraser's study of Thomas Reid, published in 1898, may be cited to indicate in a summary way just what those questions were at the turn of the century:

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1. Cf. Theism, pp. 317-20.

Can Reid's 'common sense' be sublimated into the universal consciousness of Hegelian dialectic, and does this translation of faith[1] into absolute science constitute the true ideal of Scottish common sense philosophy at the end of the nineteenth century? Is common knowledge, and scientific knowledge in special sciences, only knowledge 'in part,' while the true philosopher may aspire to know even as God knows? Must man thus claim omniscience as the only fit ground of his protest against sceptical nescience? Or, must his interpretation of the experience through which he is passing be, even in the end, only an inspired faith-venture, instead of the omniscience which elevates the common sense into itself?[2]

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1. Flint's term here is "belief."

2. Thomas Reid, pp. 157-8. Professor Fraser's statement shows clearly the ethical aspect of the questions involved.

CONCLUSION

The general characteristics of Scottish theistic development have now been drawn. It remains only to state, by way of conclusion, the bearing these results have upon the historical problem that is involved, and to indicate in general the solution of the underlying theological problem toward which Scottish thought evidently moves. What place do the writings of demonstrative theists in nineteenth century Scotland occupy in the broad history of efforts to "prove" God's existence and attributes? Is demonstration of religious truths or realities possible apart from the special revelation to which Christianity gives witness?

It is clear that Scottish theistic literature must be read and understood in its own chosen light, and in accordance with its own ultimate standards, before it is subjected to favorable or unfavorable criticism. It is wrong, obviously, to dismiss the development of natural theology in Scotland as an insignificant backwash of the English deistic controversy when Scotsmen by deep-rooted tradition, if not by temperament, had little sympathy with the effort to measure all truths—including truths indispensible to religion—by the "apodictic" demonstrations of reason. If the reading of Hume's thought that has been offered is right, the evidence of Scotland's foremost philosophic mind indicates an orientation of thought very different from that of English rationalism. But, of course, Scottish theists adjudged Hume's philosophical premises sceptical and false to the

rational nature of man. They replaced them with the premises of a "mediating philosophy."

Scottish demonstrative theism is characterized by the acceptance of the principles of Common Sense Philosophy. Fundamental to this philosophy is the insistence that all of the great problems with which theism is concerned must be viewed at the human point of view, which is one neither of total ignorance necessitating scepticism, nor of "gnostic" certainty dispelling all doubt and dispensing with the need for intellectual candor and humility in pressing for theistic conviction. Man is capable of knowledge, but knows only as man, whose best guarantee against the errors of blind subjectivity is to know in community with fellow men who share his rational nature. Theistic proof is possible, and in a way necessary, within this sphere of Common Sense. For the knowledge of one must somehow be capable of becoming the knowledge of all. Rational discussion thus determined is in no way intended to compel anyone by means of a thoroughly objective, abstract, and irrefragable logic to accept as true something that lies beyond the ordinary grasp of human reason. The logic assiduously developed by Common Sense Philosophy is, most simply, that domestic virtue of the mind by which an orderly and knowledgeable arrangement is given to all that experience brings home to anyone who attentively considers what is being presented. "Demonstration" here signifies calling for closer attention to the profoundest elements of living experience: it is "pointing out" what others in seeing may have failed to see, or have inadequately construed. It is in this light that Chalmers' "Theology of Conscience" is to be read and understood, as also Tulloch's argument expressed in the aphorism, "Nullus spiritus, nullus Deus," and, of course, Flint's System

of Natural Theology. Even John Caird, who disparaged "Common Sense" for the most part, seems to have speculated within the shadow of its influence--as is evidenced by the number of respects in which his Hegelianism is noticeably more "humanised" than some forms given to Hegel's thought in England and on the continent. Scottish theistic development on the whole was largely independent of comparable developments either in England or elsewhere, and in matters of rational principle relied primarily upon Scottish philosophical results. This is the historical conclusion to which this study has come.

But what is the theological result toward which the development of "demonstrative theism" in Scotland has come? Is there an assured knowledge of the living God apart from "special revelation"--which in Scotland could only mean, apart from Christian revelation? None of the Scottish thinkers here considered, with the probable exception of Hume, questioned the ultimacy and final truth of the revelation given in Jesus Christ. The four who have represented the broad span of the nineteenth century were theologians within the Church of Scotland, it is true; but there can be little doubt that they taught Christian doctrine only in accordance with deepest personal convictions, and without reservations tantamount to hypocrisy. Yet all affirmed, as a matter of sober fact, that beside the knowledge of God made possible by the unique revelation given in Jesus Christ, there is a knowledge of Him which gives substance to "Natural Theology."

To the question, Can man by the use of his reason know that there is a personal God?, the increasingly assured answer of Scottish theistic writers is "Yes." To the further question, <u>How</u> can man know

that God is and what He is?, the reply is most simply, "By knowing God!"--which is to say by knowing Him as He manifests Himself in the manifold life of nature and history, above all by considering the actions of His Spirit upon the conscience, the intellect, and the maturing personality of mankind from the dawn of history to the latest "present moment." Such knowledge is at first a very general "apprehension" to which the mind may feel itself impelled by the force of moral consciousness and of irrepressible intellect. In this general form, knowledge is belief--lacking in precision, confused in particulars, erroneous in discerning "differences" and details of the first importance. It is imperfect knowledge, but knowledge nevertheless. In learning to see wholly--that is, out of every window of human personality--and in striving to see reality whole--that is, without concentrating upon one facet to the exclusion or disparagement of others--the mind is able increasingly to see belief transformed into "scientific knowledge." While at the stage of belief the impetus to this scientific process seems to spring from within the human spirit, it becomes increasingly apparent that the process is evoked by the Presence of the all-powerful, "all-methodical," and all-righteous Spirit, who is the parent Fact of all facthood, the Sovereign Reality confronting man at every turn, the living God.

But, this which gives substance to "natural theology" or "rational theism" is seen--by Common Sense theists at least--to be knowledge of God only in His "public capacity" as Sovereign of a world in which men are free to revolt, and have in fact revolted, against the Person and purposes of the Eternal. From the beginning, the sombre and irrational character of sin and of evil were never discounted entirely. Even Flint's

rather optimistic doctrine of progress could not wholly offset the darker side of human experience to which Confessionalism had given vigorous witness. If Caird was ever led to doubt the adequacy of his Idealistic system, it was probably at the point where Idealism tended to justify rebellion against God as a necessary reaction, or "negation," within the ongoing dialectical process. Scottish theists were disposed to take seriously what Tulloch called "the insurrection of the human will against the Divine." They also recognized the need for a profounder knowledge of God—a knowledge that behind His righteousness, His power, and His orderliness, there is a love that seeks to reconcile sinful men to Himself. This knowledge, made plain only at great cost to God, is given in Jesus Christ, to be received in the privacy of Christian belief by all to whom God reveals His inmost heart.

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1. For the sake of convenience, the bibliography is divided into two general classifications: I. Primary Sources, and II. Secondary Sources. The former includes only the theological and philosophical writings of the eight men, from John Locke to John Caird, who have a prominent place in this thesis. All other works come under Secondary Sources. These are further classified as (A) Bibliographical; (B) Biographical; (C) Historical—including general histories of religious or philosophical thought; and very broadly, (D) Theological and Philosophical. This last category includes both "original" writings bearing upon the subject of the thesis and critical studies of original writings. Since periodical literature on Scottish Theism is extremely limited, no separate classification is included. All pamphlets and articles are designated as such and listed under author's name.

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